AMERICAN LITERATURE

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AMERICAN LITERATURE

BY

ROY BENNETT PACE

ASSISTANT PROFESSOR OF ENGLISH
SWARTHMORE COLLEGE

37248

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Boston New York Chicago

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To

WILLIAM ALLEN WILBUR

SCHOLAR TEACHER

FRIEND

PREFACE

This book is the outcome of personal experience with the problem of teaching literature to young people. Usefulness has been the first thing sought, and it is this that has determined the chief features of the book.

Only those writers have been treated whose works the students may reasonably be expected to read. It is not the mission of a history of literature for schools to furnish a complete encyclopedia of names.

There has been no attempt to give detailed treatment of recent writers, with whom the magazines have made most pupils familiar. A fair judgment cannot as yet be passed on their work, and time for consideration of them cannot well be spared from the earlier writers, who are the first object of our study.

Nowhere in the book has simplicity been sacrificed for the sake of literary effect. Too often the author of a text-book has spoiled an otherwise good chapter by a few flights of fancy or a clever analogy quite beyond the student's observation and experience.

In the matter of proportion this book differs from most in the space given to Southern literature. The position that should be taken on both sides of Mason and Dixon's line is admirably expressed by Professor Wendell: "As our new patriotism strengthens, we cannot prize too highly such verses as Whittier's, honestly phrasing noble Northern sentiment, or as Timrod's, who with equal honesty phrased the noble sentiment of the South."

No pains have been spared to equip the book with useful and attractive illustrations. "Whoever would understand a poet," says the proverb, "must pay a visit to the poet's country." It is hoped that the homes and haunts, the manuscripts and title-pages, the portraits, tombs, and monuments reproduced here will help the pupil to pay such visits in imagination, and will enliven and increase his interest in the men and their works.

To the many friends who have aided by criticism and suggestion the author here records his indebtedness and gratitude. Though he alone is responsible for the form which the book finally takes, that form is due in no small degree to kindly consideration given by those with other and better points of view.

ROY BENNETT PACE.

SWARTHMORE COLLEGE, PENNSYLVANIA,
January 1, 1915.

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AMERICAN LITERATURE

AMERICAN LITERATURE

INTRODUCTION

This book aims to trace briefly the rise and growth of literature in America. The word literature is here used in its broadest sense — the written record of the life of a people or nation. Of literature in its more restricted sense — "writing which has claim to consideration on the ground of beauty of form or emotional effect" — the first two hundred years of English life in America produced only a few examples; the first hundred years scarcely one. During this time, however, there were produced many pieces of writing an acquaintance with which is essential to an understanding of the life of our forefathers, and which throw not a little light on genuine literary productions of the later period.

It is only three centuries since the first permanent English colony was planted on the shores of the James. That little band of settlers found a vast expanse of country over which roamed at will savage tribes of red men. Their only writings consisted of hieroglyphics scratched rudely on bark or stone for the purpose of conveying information of passing interest. So far as is known they had not a single permanent record of any kind. The only literature, therefore, that can be called American is that produced by the European settlers of America, and we are interested in only so much of that as was produced in the thirteen English colonies and their outgrowth, the United States. To

this literature by common consent the name American has been limited.

England at the time of the dawn of American literature was enjoying a period of great prosperity and influence, thanks to the genius and wisdom of Queen Elizabeth, who had lived till four years before the landing at Jamestown. James I, as king of England and Scotland, had united the crowns of the two countries. He was encouraging the expansion of British trade and the extension of the British domain by subsidizing exploration, and by granting royal patents to his noble friends for the colonizing of America.

Englishmen of this happy period possessed a rich heritage of literature, including the works of Chaucer, Malory, Spenser, and Marlowe. They were enjoying the companionship of such immortals as Beaumont and Fletcher, Ben Jonson, Bacon, and Shakspere. Under the direction of the authors themselves they saw acted those great dramas that will be the delight and inspiration of millions so long as the English language shall exist.

When our forefathers sailed away from the shores of England to Virginia and to Massachusetts, they carried with them, as Englishmen, an interest in this priceless heritage. As we trace the growth of literature in America we shall observe that the literary dependence of America on England gradually became less in the same way and for much the same reason as did the political dependence. As America became settled and her men and women found time for self-culture and contemplation, she became less dependent on the mother country for literary inspiration; and with nationality came literature in its more restricted sense, a literature permeated with the freshness and the vigor of the land that gave it birth.

While no division of American literature into periods can be entirely satisfactory, it will be convenient to recognize

four up to the year 1892 — the year chosen as the limit of this survey. These are:

1. From John Smith to Benjamin Franklin (1608–1758).
2. From Benjamin Franklin to Washington Irving (1758–1809).
3. From Washington Irving to the end of the Civil War (1809–1865).
4. From the end of the Civil War to the deaths of Walt Whitman and John G. Whittier (1865–1892).

THE PORTRAICTVER OF CAPTAINE IOHN SMITH / ADMIRALL OF NEW ENGLAND.
These are the Lines that shew thy Face; but those
That shew thy Grace and Glory, brighter bee:
Thy Faire-Discoueries and Fowle-Ouerthrowes
Of Salvages, much Civillized by thee
Best shew thy Spirit; and to it Glory Wyn:
So, thou art Brasse without, but Golde within.

JOHN SMITH, "ADMIRAL OF NEW ENGLAND."

CHAPTER I

FROM JOHN SMITH TO BENJAMIN FRANKLIN

American literature had a beginning very different from that of most nations. Most literatures began before the language in which they were subsequently written had a definite form. They began in verse, usually in the songs of bards who celebrated the heroic deeds of individuals and of tribes. They expressed the emotions, beliefs, aspirations, of a society more or less primitive, a civilization but slightly developed. Our knowledge of these beginnings rests on a long period of oral transmission.

Quite in contrast to such conditions, the author of the first book written on American soil knew that his work could be manifolded by the printing press within a few months of its completion. His language was the language of one of the world's great literatures, even then at its highest achievement. Furthermore, it was the language of a civilization second to none, of a nation acknowledging no superior in intellectual or physical accomplishment. It looked back nine centuries to a great epic poem, *Beowulf;* two centuries to Chaucer, a poet whose breadth of view made him a world figure; and a few decades to the defeat of the Spanish Armada, a victory that showed the men who spoke the language to be truly great spirits.

John Smith (1580–1631). — The author of this first book was John Smith, whose writings belong to history rather than to literature, and to England rather than to America, but who cannot be omitted from a sketch like the present. Born in Lincolnshire, England, in 1580, he had from the

age of sixteen been an adventurer, traveling in various parts of Europe and in Northern Africa, fighting in various armies and causes, and gathering an interesting lot of experiences. His love of adventure persuaded him to join the party just setting out to colonize Virginia in 1607, and soon after reaching Jamestown he was named a member of the Council, or governing board. In this position Smith showed such ability that in September, 1608, he was made president of the body; and it was chiefly to his wise and vigorous, if sometimes unscrupulous, methods that the successful establishment of the Virginia colony was due.

STATUE AT JAMESTOWN OF SMITH, "GOVERNOR OF VIRGINIA."

Only one of Smith's numerous books comes within the scope of this work. Its full title, which in its length is characteristic of the time, is: *A True Relation of such occurrences and accidents of noate as hath hapned in Virginia since the first planting of that Collony, which is now resident in the South part thereof, till the last returne from thence. Written by Captaine Smith Coronell of the said Collony, to a worshipfull friend of his in England.* The author lays no claim to style, and even the construction of his sentences is often such as would shame a high school boy of to-day. But his narrative possesses in no small degree the merits of simplicity, directness, and vividness, and gives many inter-

TRVE RE-
lation of ſuch occur-

rences and accidents of noate as
hath hapned in Virginia ſince the firſt
planting of that Collony, which is now
reſident in the South part thereof, till
the laſt returne from
thence.

Written by Captaine Smith *Coronell of the ſaid Collony, to a*
worſhipfull friend of his in England.

LONDON
Printed for *Iohn Tappe*, and are to bee ſolde at the Grey-
hound in Paules-Church-yard, by *W. W.*
1608

FACSIMILE TITLE-PAGE OF SMITH'S *A True Relation*, FIRST EDITION.
(Courtesy of New York Public Library.)

esting details of the life of the natives and his experiences with them. His reason for writing he gives in these words: "Many of the most eminent warriors what their swords did, their pens writ. Though I be never so much their inferior, yet I hold it no great error to follow good examples." It should be remarked, however, that some modern scholars question the accuracy of much Smith wrote. The Pocahontas incident, for example, which Smith told in two ways, is by many considered a choice bit of fiction.

Still, after making due allowances for boasting and for unintentional exaggeration, the *True Relation* is conceded to be in the main a trustworthy account; and as the first written record of the first permanent English colony in America, it deserves a place of honor in our literature as well as in our history.

William Strachey. — Of several other historians of the Southern colony William Strachey is perhaps the most notable. Almost nothing is known of his life, but his selection as secretary of the colony indicates that he had enjoyed educational advantages. Strachey's *History of Travaile into Virginia Britannia*, written after his return to England, is said to be "the most reliable single narrative of events during the period of Virginia history with which he deals."[1] Our interest in the man, however, arises not from his importance as an historian, but from the fact that one work of his is by some believed to have given a hint to Shakspere. This work is entitled: *A True Reportory of the Wrack and Redemption of Sir Thomas Gates, Kt., upon and from the Islands of the Bermudas; his Coming to Virginia; and the Estate of that Colony then and after under the Government of Lord La Ware.* (Compare, for length, Smith's title above.) In it occurs a powerful description of a storm encountered by a fleet of English vessels bound for Virginia. It is said

[1] *New International Encyclopedia.*

that Shakspere had this description before him when he wrote *The Tempest*.[1]

While Strachey is forceful and vivid, far more so than Smith ever could have been, it seems rather an exaggeration to say, even of the tempest passage, as does Tyler, that "it has some sentences which for imaginative and pathetic beauty . . . can hardly be surpassed in the whole range of English prose."

Ruins of Jamestown Church.
Now cared for by the Association for the Preservation of Virginia Antiquities, which owns the island.

Early Literary Work in North and South. — Writings of perhaps a dozen Southern colonists before 1700 have come down to us, while from New England during that time we have three or four times as many. The explanation of this difference is not difficult. Virginia was colonized at first largely by adventurers and speculators — men who came in hope of gain for themselves and for the noble gentlemen in England who financed the expeditions.[2] They had no thought of settling permanently, and

[1] For a full statement of the question, with what seems to us a fair conclusion, see *The Tempest*, Furness's Variorum Ed., page 312.

[2] Beginning about forty years after Jamestown, a much better class of immigrants arrived, men of good birth and education who sought

many of them — including Smith and Strachey — did remain only a few years. They had little interest in literature, and no ambition to enroll themselves in the register of literary fame. Their published "works" are hardly more than elaborate official reports, containing such information about the country and its inhabitants and the experience of the colony as the patentees at home might reasonably expect. Lastly, lack of educational facilities — or we may say more truly, the presence of educational restrictions — necessarily prevented those who became permanent residents from being equipped for literary work.

The settlers of New England, on the contrary, came to escape persecution, to found a new *home* for themselves. If not interested in literature for its own sake, they realized the value of clear, forceful writing for controversial purposes. Even the narrative writers of New England wrote with a very different purpose from that of the Southerners. Although often forced by pressure of more immediate considerations to make their chronicles brief, they prepared them with much care, not for the present but for the future. This is sufficiently shown by the fact that the first two historians, Bradford and Winthrop, did not publish, but at their deaths left their works in manuscript. Another point to be noted is that public schools were early provided in Massachusetts (1636), and a very generally educated citizenship resulted.

William Bradford (1590–1657). — The first work written in New England was William Bradford's *History of Plymouth Plantation*. In its original and complete form it was not printed until 1855; but it was the chief source of several historical works published in Massachusetts from 1669 down,

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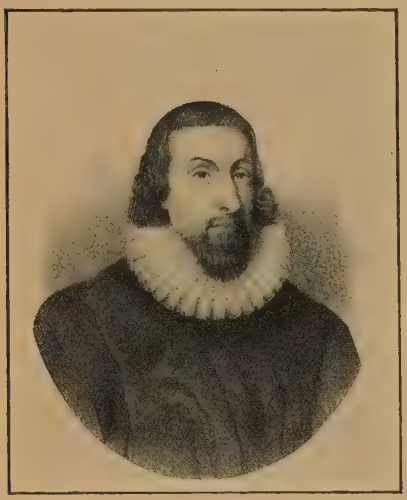
refuge from the repressive rule of Cromwell. It is from the "Cavaliers" who came over in the half century following 1650 that many of the "First Families of Virginia" are descended.

and its author has been not inaptly called the "Father of American History." Bradford was born in Yorkshire in 1590, and landed on Plymouth Rock from the *Mayflower*. The following year he was elected governor, and was re-elected annually until his death in 1657, with the exception of a few years when by his own wish he was allowed to retire. His *History* covers in the form of annals the period from 1620 to 1647. It cannot be said to have greater literary merit than the narratives of Smith and Strachey. Nowhere does it approach the power and vividness of Strachey's tempest passage; but it is characterized by a uniform dignity and sincerity not found in the works of the Southern chroniclers. As might be expected, it has a religious tone throughout, as had every expression of the first century of New England life. An excellent example of the Puritan attitude toward amusements, as well as of Bradford's general style, may be found in his account of Morton's settlement at "Ma-re Mount" — a passage which has additional interest because of having formed the basis of one of Hawthorne's tales.[1]

John Winthrop (1588–1649). — Hardly less important than Bradford is John Winthrop, the first governor of the Massachusetts Colony. Appointed to that position by the Company, he led the band of colonists that landed at Salem in June, 1630, and removed in September to Boston. He was repeatedly (though not consecutively) reappointed, holding the governorship for twelve out of nineteen years. His history, published under the ambitious title of *The History of New England*, is a diary recording the life of the colony to his death. He is quite indiscriminate in noting events, and is unintentionally amusing in the blunt and matter-of-fact way in which he writes of them. The death of a cow is mentioned without comment, as is that of his son; the

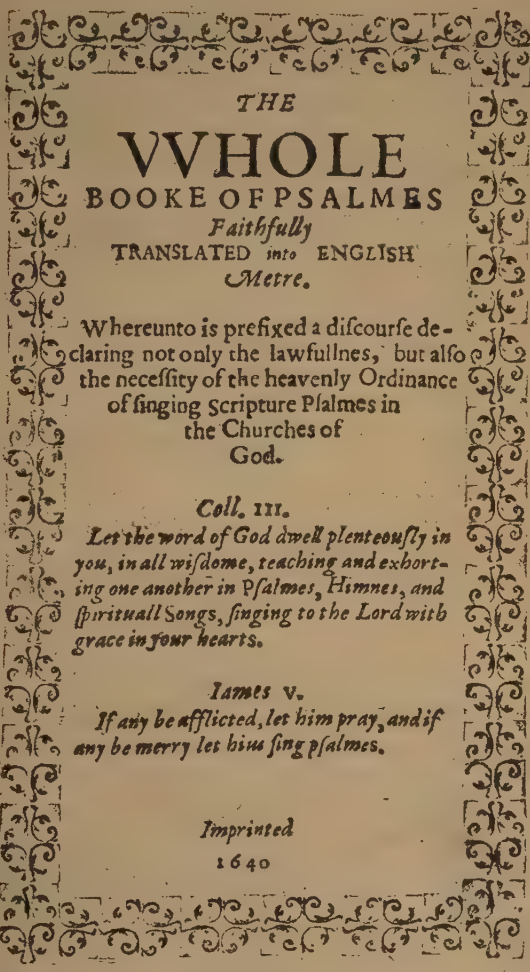
[1] *The Maypole of Merry Mount*, in *Twice Told Tales*.

execution of a murderer, the meeting of court, his unexpectedly filling a vacant pulpit, the killing of six calves by wolves, the marriage of Captain Endicott, a debate in church — all these matters are, if we may judge by the space and prominence given them, of equal consequence to future times. A sense of proportion cannot be included in the long list of merits attributed to him by his admirers. The book is, however, an invaluable record of the early days of the Massachusetts Colony, from which all subsequent historians have drawn. One year (1645) stands out conspicuously above the average, because in it is reported a speech of Governor Winthrop on the nature of liberty, delivered in court after acquittal of the charge of exceeding his authority. Of this speech a distinguished statesman said, "It is the best definition of liberty in the English language."



JOHN WINTHROP.

The Bay Psalm Book. — Since there was produced almost, if not absolutely, no real poetry in colonial New England, it is on first thought remarkable that the first book printed there was a book of verse. The fact, however, becomes less striking when we discover that this production was *The Bay Psalm Book*, the work of several clergymen, of whom the most important were John Eliot (1604–1690) and Richard Mather (1596–1669). The extremest enthusiast for our early


THE

VVHOLE BOOKE OF PSALMES

Faithfully
TRANSLATED *into* ENGLISH
Metre.

Whereunto is prefixed a diſcourſe declaring not only the lawfullnes, but alſo the neceſſity of the heavenly Ordinance of ſinging Scripture Pſalmes in the Churches of God.

Coll. III.

Let the word of God dwell plenteouſly in you, in all wiſdome, teaching and exhorting one another in Pſalmes, Himnes, and ſpirituall Songs, ſinging to the Lord with grace in your hearts.

Iames V.

If any be afflicted, let him pray, and if any be merry let him ſing pſalmes.

Imprinted
1640

FACSIMILE TITLE-PAGE OF *The Bay Psalm Book.*
(New York Public Library.)

literature would not call these versified psalms poetry. The authors did not, indeed, aim to make poetry; they aimed merely to produce a hymn book which should render faithfully "David's poetry into English metre." The most that can be said for the forms of the Psalms here is that they are generally not much worse than Milton's juvenile performances in the same field. "Everywhere in the book is manifested the agony it cost the writers to find two words that would rhyme — more or less; and so often as this arduous feat is achieved, the poetic athlete appears to pause a while from sheer exhaustion, panting heavily for breath."

Apart from their connection with this work Eliot and Mather are worthy of further mention. The former gave his life to christianizing the natives, and is generally known as the "Apostle to the Indians." He translated into their language not only the entire Bible, but the Catechism, Baxter's *Call to the Unconverted*, and Thomas Shepard's *The Sincere Convert*. Richard Mather shines rather by reflected light than by any luster of his own. He was the founder of the "Mather Dynasty," which included ten clergymen, and which in the second generation produced Increase Mather, a president of Harvard College, and in the third, Cotton Mather, of whom we shall hear later.

Michael Wigglesworth (1631–1705). — Besides *The Bay Psalm Book* the writings of two other seventeenth century verse makers should be noticed. Michael Wigglesworth was a clergyman, a physician, and a versifier. Of his worth in the first and third of these capacities a good impression may be got from his most famous production, entitled *The Day of Doom, or, A Poetical Description of the Great and Last Judgment*. In this all mankind are brought before the Creator to hear his judgment upon them for eternity. The "sheep," few in number, are quickly assigned to their happy places; the rest of the poem (over 1500 lines) is taken up

with the pleas of the "goats" and their condemnation by the Judge. Its vivid pictures of a future punishment of fire and brimstone are interesting as a concrete expression of the general religious conviction of the author's time. In what is perhaps the most striking passage in the poem the Judge allows to the infants who may not dwell in bliss "the easiest room in hell." As we read the work to-day, we find it hard to realize how it could have been popular, even among such religious zealots as the Puritans of New England. It is said that the first edition of 1800 copies was sold in New England within twelve months of its publication (1662), which means one copy to every thirty-five people then living there; and that the poem was memorized by children along with the Catechism.

Anne Bradstreet (1612–1672). — The position of Anne Bradstreet in this period is unique: she was the only person who wrote verse for its own sake. Like all the authors so far mentioned, Mrs. Bradstreet was born in England. She married at the age of sixteen, and emigrated with her husband two years later. A delicate woman, mother of eight children, hard-working wife of a hard-working New England farmer, she wrote enough in prose and verse to fill a volume of 400 pages — most of it before she was thirty. The volume, published in London in 1650, was burdened with one of those long-drawn-out titles characteristic of the time. It reads: *The Tenth Muse Lately sprung up in America; or, Several Poems, compiled with great variety of Wit and Learning, full of delight; wherein is especially contained a complete discourse and description of the four elements, constitutions, ages of man, seasons of the year; together with an exact epitome of the four monarchies, viz., the Assyrian, Persian, Grecian, Roman; also, a dialogue between Old England and New concerning the late troubles; with divers other pleasant and serious poems. By a Gentlewoman in those parts.*

It must be admitted that much in Mrs. Bradstreet's verse does not rise above that of Wigglesworth or *The Bay Psalm Book*. On the other hand she at times reaches a height altogether beyond that of any of her contemporaries. Though usually faulty in execution, her best passages show unquestionable poetic insight, and a genuine poetic approach to

Old Bradstreet House.
North Andover, Massachusetts.

nature. A good specimen of this may be seen in the stanza of *Contemplations* in praise of the grasshopper and the cricket. Though much of her poetry has the characteristic religious tone, Mrs. Bradstreet is distinguished from other New England verse writers by the fact that it was never her purpose to inculcate doctrine. The mere pleasure of composition seems to have been her greatest spur. Of her it has been well said that she, "in some worthy sense, found in poetry a vocation."

Of the host of theologians who gave to the literature of this period its character, two stand out preëminent — Cotton Mather and Jonathan Edwards. Both came of ministerial stock; both were phenomenal children; both distinguished themselves in their own calling and in others; and both exerted great influence among their people.

Cotton Mather (1663–1728). — Cotton Mather was the third and the greatest of the "Mather Dynasty" already referred to, and is the first writer mentioned in this book who was born in America. His father, Increase, and both his grandfathers, Richard Mather and John Cotton, were ministers. From childhood he was famed for his learning and piety; he was graduated from Harvard at the age of fifteen; he began preaching at seventeen. He knew Latin, Greek, Hebrew, French, Spanish, and Algonquin (an Indian dialect); and he published books in most of these languages. He had the largest private library in the New World, and was, apparently, acquainted with all it contained. He was a tremendous worker, and by a legend over his study door invited visitors to waste no words. For forty years he was connected with the North Church of Boston as assistant pastor (to his father) and as pastor.

Grave of Cotton Mather.
In Copp's Hill Cemetery, Boston.

From firm conviction he became a leader in the witchcraft persecution, and set forth the grounds of his conviction in several treatises.

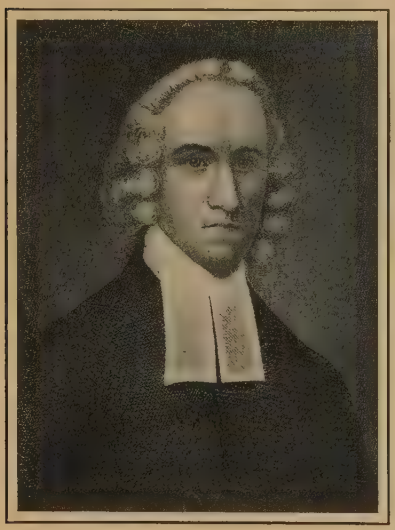
We shall notice only two of the more than four hundred works written by Mather. To his *Essays to do Good* Franklin attributed much of his own usefulness in life, a sufficient evidence that it possessed real merit even for a practical man. Mather's greatest work, and in many respects the greatest of colonial America, is entitled: *Magnalia Christi Americana; or, The Ecclesiastical History of New England from its First Planting in the year 1620, unto the Year of Our Lord 1698.* "A bulky thing," Mather appropriately called it, for it fills over one thousand pages. A miscellaneous thing it might also be called; for it contains history of the colony, history of Harvard College, biographies of governors and of ministers, church doctrine, a record of church squabbles, and a collection of "remarkable mercies and judgements." His main purpose in the *Magnalia* seems to have been to make a final defense of the old order — of the rigorous Puritan religion which was already fast losing its power, and of the immense importance of the clergy, who were beginning to find much of their power assumed by civil officers. By this book he became more famous in Europe for his learning than were any of his countrymen. It is a storehouse of facts regarding the life of the people; but as history it is not so dependable as are the writings of Bradford and Winthrop.

Mather was a man of strong prejudices, and his learning was ill-digested and ill-arranged. His great book is, moreover, unattractive to our day by reason of its style, which was no accident, but deliberately cultivated by its author. He followed what is known as the "fantastic" school of literature, the distinguishing quality of which is a boastful display of all sorts of learning. Scarcely a page in the

OLD NORTH CHURCH, BOSTON,
In the tower of which Paul Revere's lanterns were placed.

Magnalia but is burdened with unusual phraseology and figures of speech, and with learned allusions to books, very frequently in foreign languages. The "fantastic" school had already had its day in Europe; with Mather it may be said to have had its demise.

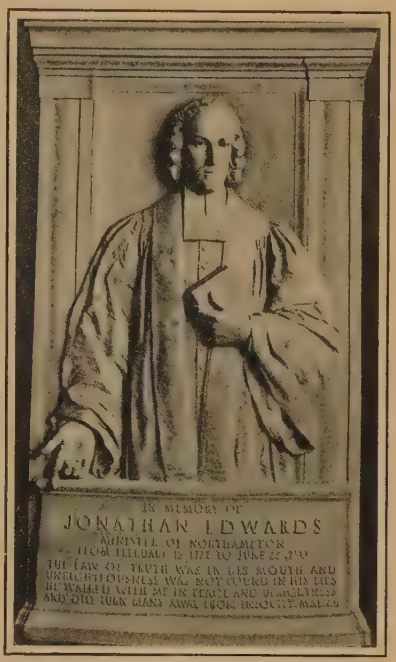
With Mather passed away also the ascendency of the clergy. His son Samuel, who succeeded him in the pastorate of the North Church, was forced by disaffection to leave his charge and form a new organization of those who adhered to him. Edwards, as we shall see, found also that a New England congregation would no longer take its pastor's word as law, but would discipline him just as he would discipline a humble member. And this changed state of things lasted. The ministry continued to be influential and respected, but never again occupied any such position of power as it had occupied throughout the seventeenth century.



JONATHAN EDWARDS.

Jonathan Edwards (1703–1758). — Jonathan Edwards was a theologian of the same type as Mather, but a man of much more trustworthy knowledge. Like Mather also he was born old and a preacher. His father was a preacher, as was his maternal grandfather; he himself married at the age of twenty-three a preacher's daughter; and one of his daughters married a preacher. On the face of things there would seem to have been enough religion in the atmosphere in which he lived, and the effect of this environment appeared early; for when about ten years old, he set apart a retreat in a near-by swamp for secret prayer.

After graduating from Yale at the age of seventeen, he studied divinity; and a few years later became a colleague pastor of the Northampton church under his grandfather, Mr. Stoddard. On the latter's death in 1729 Edwards became pastor, and remained in that position twenty-one years. At the end of that time a disagreement arose between pastor and people, and he was dismissed by an overwhelming vote. He refused calls to England, to Virginia, and to a new church to be composed of his Northampton adherents, and went as missionary to the Indians in Stockbridge, Massachusetts. Here for seven years he conducted a very successful work, and found abundant time for writing. In September, 1757, he was elected president of Princeton College, and took up the duties of this position the following January. Smallpox was prevalent in the college town when Edwards arrived; he contracted the disease, and died from it in March.



MEMORIAL TABLET TO EDWARDS.
In the church at Northampton.

Edwards's chief claim to literary distinction is usually said to rest on his philosophical treatise, *On the Freedom of the Will*, which had some influence on English as well as on

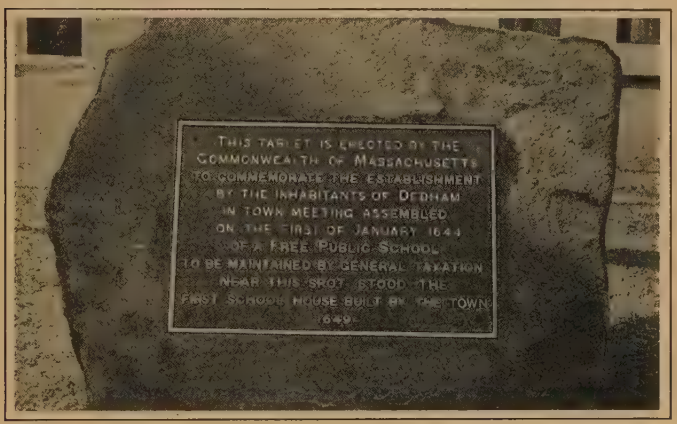
American thought. In spite of the almost universal praise bestowed upon this work as a powerful piece of independent thought, it has little real value to-day. Except for theologians and metaphysicians, it can hardly be called a "readable" book.

His sermons, which exerted such wonderful influence when delivered, read very curiously in the twentieth century. One is rather amused than edified by the fire and brimstone theology in most of them. Some critics have said that the real Edwards is not to be found in such discourses, but in those which expound the Divine Love. If, however, there is little sweetness and light and love in a sermon on the text — "In my father's house are many mansions" — one is at a loss where to look for it. What is the tone of Edwards's sermon on this text?

"You may be encouraged by what has been said, earnestly to seek heaven; for there are many mansions there. There is room enough there. . . . Let our young people, therefore, take warning from hence, and don't be such fools as to neglect seeking a place and mansion in heaven. . . . Consider when you die, if you have no mansion in the house of God in heaven, you must have your place of abode in the habitation of devils."

Edwards's most famous discourse, and the one which, if not thoroughly typical of him, is at least typical of the religion he believed and expounded, is *Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God.* This was the beginning, we are told, of a great religious revival, which lasted two years; and of its immediate effect: "There was such a breathing of distress and weeping that the preacher was obliged to speak to the people and desire silence, that he might be heard." Future punishment was a theme often treated by him, and always in very realistic style. In one of these sermons, *The Future Punishment of the Wicked Unavoidable and Intolerable,* beginning with the picture of a human being cast into a fiery

oven for a quarter of an hour, he works up to what he intended to be a terrific climax, and then adds: "But your torment in hell will be immensely greater than this illustration represents." In another, *The Distinguishing Marks of a Work of the Spirit of God*, explaining, as it were, his continual return to this topic, he says: "If I am in danger of going to hell, I should be glad to know as much as I possibly can of the dreadfulness of it." With an ever


THIS TABLET IS ERECTED BY THE
COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS
TO COMMEMORATE THE ESTABLISHMENT
BY THE INHABITANTS OF DEDHAM
IN TOWN MEETING ASSEMBLED
ON THE FIRST OF JANUARY 1644
OF A FREE PUBLIC SCHOOL
TO BE MAINTAINED BY GENERAL TAXATION
NEAR THIS SPOT STOOD THE
FIRST SCHOOL HOUSE BUILT BY THE TOWN
1649

TABLET COMMEMORATING THE FIRST PUBLIC SCHOOL IN AMERICA.
(Photograph by courtesy of Julius H. Tuttle, Esq., President of the Dedham Historical Society.)

present conviction of the intense wickedness of men, and an equally strong conviction of the terrors of future punishment, he felt impelled to repeated warnings. His preaching aimed, it would seem, not so much to lead men to eternal bliss as to save them from eternal torment.

Education in the Colonies. — Since the literary activity of the different colonies depended very largely on their educational advantages, it is interesting to trace the development of education among them. New England was settled in

towns and villages, often by pastors with their flocks. Large farms were not profitable, the Indians were hostile, and family ties tended to keep the settlements compact. No sooner was one well established than the meeting house and schoolhouse were built. The preacher and the schoolmaster were the most influential persons in every community. To provide for the education of the children was as essential as to provide means of worship. In 1647 the first school law in America was passed in Massachusetts,

HARVARD COLLEGE.
From an old print by Paul Revere.

requiring every town of fifty householders to establish a school. By 1649 every New England colony excepting Rhode Island had passed laws making education compulsory.

In the Southern colonies, on the other hand, the farms were large and scattered, the Indians were less troublesome, and there were few villages. Frequently even the county court house stood by itself with only one or two dwellings within miles. "The Virginia parishes were so extensive," says Campbell in his *History of Virginia*, "that parishioners

sometimes lived at a distance of fifty miles from the parish church." By the very nature of things a system of schools like that in New England was impossible. The people grieved much because it could be said that their children "were inferior in knowledge to their ancestors," and proposed various methods for solving the problem. To make

OLDEST BUILDING OF WILLIAM AND MARY COLLEGE (FOUNDED 1693). Part of the wall is left from the original structure, which was destroyed by fire.

things still harder for them they were afflicted from 1641 to 1677 with Sir William Berkeley as a royal governor, whose position as to education was expressed in these words: "I thank God there are no free schools, nor printing presses; and I hope we shall not have, these hundred years, for learning has brought disobedience and heresy, and sects

New-England. Numb. 308.

The Boston News-Letter.

Published by Authority.

From Monday March 6. to Monday March 13. 1709.

Whitehall, August 17.

The following Address from the Commons of *Ireland* has been Transmitted by his Excellency the Earl of *Wharton*, Lord-Lieutenant of that Kingdom, & presented by Mr. Secretary *Boyle* to Her Majesty, who received it very graciously.

To the QUEEN's most Excellent Majesty.
The humble Address of the Knights, Citizens and Burgesses in Parliament Assembled.

May it please your Majesty,

Your Majesty's loyal & faithful Commons, with great Delight & Satisfaction, return their unfeigned Thanks to your Majesty for your most gracious Answer to their humble Address, in which they beseech your Majesty, that the Outlawries of Persons guilty of the Rebellions in One thousand six hundred forty one, and One thousand six hundred eighty eight, which are of Force, may so remain.

They no longer apprehend that any Sollicitations can be successful to obtain the Reversal of such Outlawries, when they consider the Protection they have hitherto enjoyed under your Majesty's most auspicious Government, and have your Royal Promise that your Majesty will always have a great Regard to the Titles and Interests of your Protestant Subjects, and particularly to such as depend upon the Forfeitures and Outlawries of Persons guilty of the Rebellions in One thousand six hundred forty one, and One thousand six hundred eighty eight.

And are happy in this Opportunity of assuring your Majesty, That [illegible] have from the beginning of this Parliament, acted with the deepest Sense of Duty and Gratitude towards the best of Queens, they will by their future Behaviour, endeavour to deserve the Continuance of Your Majesty's Favour and good Opinion of your Majesty's most dutiful Subjects.

London, August 16. We have at present little business stirring at home; the chief Affair in hand is how to provide for the poor Protestant Palatines: A great many of the Unmarried Men have been new Cloath'd, and put on Board Her Majesties Ships of War, to be trained up in Navigation. The Commissioners are sending 500 Families to *Ireland* to be settled there; which may prove a very proper Method in a short time to Outvote the Roman Catholicks, who are but too too numerous in that Kingdom. It is said another part of them will be settled along the Coasts of *North Britain*. The Lords Proprietors of *Carolina* have invited them upon very advantageous Terms to settle there, but as it would certainly be more beneficial to this Nation, and Correspondent with the late Naturalization Act, upon which foundation they came over, to settle here: It is under Consideration how to dispose of them so as that without being any burthen to the *English*, they may be put into a Capacity of maintaining themselves, and Encreasing the Wealth and Trade of these Kingdoms. In the mean time they dwell with their Families in Tents on Black-heath and adjacent Parts. Her Majesty allows them upwards of an hundred and sixty Pounds *per* day, which with private Charity subsists them pretty well. They appear a very harmless, innocent People, industrious, willing to labour, and very ingenious. Almost all sorts of Trades are carrying on in their Camp, which draws daily an incredible Concourse of People from all Parts, out of Curiosity to see this new Palatinate. Where-ever they settle, they will encrease and multiply, for their women are very fruitful, and seldom fail of two at a Birth. People Contribute very liberally for their Maintainance and Settlement to the General Collection for them by Publick Authority, which will amount to a considerable Sum. We have advice from *Newfoundland*, that the *French* had blown up the Fortifications of Fort St. *Johns*, burnt some of the Houses, and suffer'd the Inhabitants to ransom the rest, together with their Fishing Trade; Payment to be made in *October* next, and so were gone for fear of the British Fleet expected from *England*. Ships now Loading for Boston. Drake Capt. *Ebenezar Dennis*. Nightingale Capt. *William Weiber*. New-York Merchant Capt. *Thomas Jeffers* for New-York.

Ostend, Aug. 17. N. S. Letters from *Hanover* of the 6th Instant advise, that his Electoral Highness began his Journey towards the Imperial Army on the Upper Rhine the Day before. They write from *Strasbourg*, that it is expected the *French* Army will repass the Rhine as soon as the Imperialists move out of their present Camp. They add, that the Forces of the Empire are much superior in number to those of *France*, which makes the Marshal *d'Harcourt* very apprehensive that some great Attempt will be made in *Alsace* upon the arrival of the Elector of *Hanover* to the Army. The *French* keep great Numbers at work on their Lines behind the *Lauter* to prevent the Irruptions of the Enemy, and preserve the Corn of the adjacent Country for their own use. When these Advices were dispatched, the Marshal *d'Harcourt* was just arrived at *Strasbourg*, and had given the necessary Orders of his Infantry to be Transported to the Lines of *Lauterbourg*. It is reported from the Frontiers, that in the Action near *Conflans* the Enemy lost twelve hundred Men; after which the Confederate Forces marched on towards *Chamberry*, which Place not being in a condition for a Defence, the Garison retired and marched to the Camp near Barreaux. The Inhabitants of the Country are in a general Consternation & fly in Crouds to *Grenoble*. All Persons of distinction in those Parts are so much alarmed at the approach of the Imperial Forces, that they remove their Effects beyond the Rhone.

Tournay August 17. N. S. On Tuesday, a General review is to be made of our Army; and no doubt, if the War continues, we shall endeavour to penetr[illegible] into France. General Schulemberg reck[illegible] Master of the Countersçarp in 4 Da[illegible]

[illegible] [illegible] N. S. His Excellency the Earl of Ga[illegible] [illegible]ngerously ill of the Gout, but is now [illegible] be Project of that Gene-

BOSTON NEWS-LETTER.
The first periodical in America that enjoyed a long life.
(New York Public Library.)

into the world, and printing has divulged them, and libels against the best government. God keep us from both."

In the middle colonies New Jersey was the first (1693) to provide public schools. New York and Pennsylvania had only private schools until after the Revolution.

In 1636 Massachusetts provided for the establishment at Newtown (Cambridge) of a college, which was later called Harvard, in grateful remembrance of the liberality of a preacher, John Harvard. The other colleges established before 1758 were: William and Mary, in 1693; Yale, in 1700; Princeton, in 1746; the University of Pennsylvania, in 1749; Columbia, in 1754. Many of the colonists, especially those in the South, sent their sons to England to be educated. It is said that at a time before 1700 one person out of every two hundred in New England was a graduate of the English Cambridge, and that there were many Oxford men besides.

OLD SOUTH CHURCH, BOSTON.
Besides serving for many years as a meeting-house, Old South was the scene of many momentous town meetings in the years just preceding the Revolution.

Periodical Literature. — Periodical literature in America began with *Publick Occurrences*, one issue of which appeared in Boston in 1690. It was announced to be published monthly "or oftener"; but the contents of the first number

displeased the authorities, and it was suppressed within twenty-four hours. The Boston *News-Letter*, begun in 1704, held the field alone for fifteen years, after which rivals sprang up rapidly. The most important of these early journals were: the *Boston Gazette*, and the *American Weekly Mercury* of Philadelphia (both 1719); the *New England Courant* (by James Franklin, brother of Benjamin, 1721); the *New York Gazette* (1725); the *Boston Evening Post* (1735); and a second *Boston Gazette* (1755).[1] John Adams was a contributor to the last named, and it became a strong "voice of the people" against England. After this date other papers followed rapidly, and for a long time contented themselves with simply publishing news items and advertisements, abstaining carefully from anything that resembled an editorial opinion. Most of them were weeklies, and were very diminutive sheets.

Monthly journals, with distinctly literary pretensions, began with Franklin's *The General Magazine* (Philadelphia, 1741). Of its many followers during the next twenty years the most noteworthy were *The American Magazine* (Boston, 1743), *The Independent Reflector* (New York, 1752), and a second *American Magazine* (Philadelphia, 1757).

[1] The earlier *Gazette* had been absorbed by the *News-Letter*, the pro-British organ in New England.

CHAPTER II

FROM FRANKLIN TO IRVING, 1758–1809

Introduction. — In the year 1758 Jonathan Edwards, the last of the great colonial theologians, died. As we noted in writing of Mather, the ascendency of the clergy was already on the wane; and Edwards was the last of that calling who strove to maintain the dictatorship it had possessed.

Bust of Franklin.
By Houdon, noted French sculptor.

An event of far more importance to letters than the death of Edwards was the appearance in the same year of "the most famous piece of literature the colonies produced." This was Franklin's *The Way to Wealth, or, Preface to Poor Richard Improved,* better known perhaps as "Father Abraham's Speech." Its particular significance in the chronology of our literature lies in the fact that it is the first notable piece of writing of the first American to obtain recognition abroad.

Rise of Political Literature. — Although *The Way to Wealth* is not quite typical of the literary productions of this period, the author is typical of the writers in that most of his life and writing were devoted to the gaining of independence and the establishment of the Republic. The literature of the preceding period was chiefly either leisurely records of current events (in the South), or vigorous religious discussions (in New England). The former dealt with existing conditions only, and was satisfied with them. The latter represented an aspiration for improvement, but only in the direction of a future life. On the other hand, the men we are now to study became convinced that the government under which they lived was unjust; and they devoted the best energies of their pens and voices toward breaking away from this government, and creating a new one and a new society on altogether new principles. Their concern was to better their circumstances in this earthly life.

The new style of writing was the natural expression of a feeling of nationality which had previously been lacking. Henry's "I am not a Virginian, but an American," found an echo in thousands of hearts in every colony. Thomas Paine speaks of the wrongs under which, not Pennsylvania, but "this continent," labors. Hamilton vindicates the title to freedom, not of New Yorkers, but of "Americans." Otis pleads for redress, not for Massachusetts alone, but for "all his Majesty's most loyal and affectionate British-American subjects." Different as were the motives and aims of the settlers in the various colonies, they had now come to realize that their common interests were far greater than any interest binding a single colony to the mother country.

By far the greatest part of this period's literary expression took the simple and popular forms of oratory, political pamphlets and essays, and patriotic poems. Before the end of the century, however, we find our first dramatist

(Godfrey), our first poet worthy of the name (Freneau), and our first novelist (Brown). Joining these three names with that of Franklin, we perceive that in addition to founding a new nation, the last half of the eighteenth century began also a new literature destined, before another half century had passed, to take an honorable place among the literatures of the world.

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN, 1706–1790

Franklin's own story of his life down to 1757 is one of the great biographies of the world. Written in the form of a letter to his son, for the latter and his descendants only, and with no thought of publication, it has found a secure place among the world's classics. It is a simple straightforward account of the author's rise by his own efforts from "poverty and obscurity . . . to a state of affluence and some degree of celebrity in the world."

Early Life. — He was born in Boston, the fifteenth of seventeen children of his father, of whom ten were by a second wife, Abiah Folger, daughter of a New England preacher who distinguished himself somewhat by his advocacy of religious toleration. Add to the

FRANKLIN'S BIRTHPLACE IN MILK STREET, BOSTON.

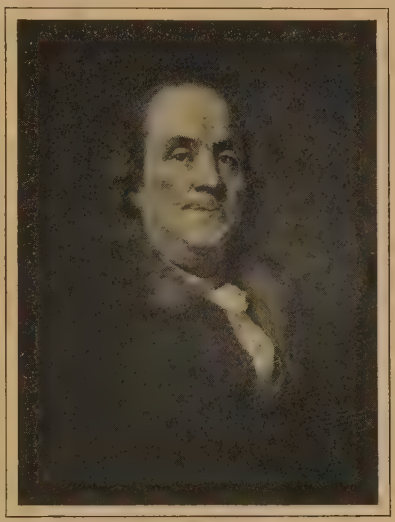
At the age of seventeen Benjamin ran away, and from that time his home was in Philadelphia.

size of the family the fact that Franklin's father was a candle maker, and the "poverty and obscurity" of his situation will be readily understood. After two years at school Benjamin was taken at the age of ten to help his father. He disliked the business; and his father, fearing that the boy would yield to a strong "hankering" for the sea, decided to put him in some line of work that would please him better. His great fondness for books prompted his father to apprentice him to his brother James, a printer.

Franklin's Printing Press.

After some disagreements with his employer, Benjamin, then seventeen years old, ran away to New York. Finding no work there, he proceeded on the advice of an acquaintance to Philadelphia, which city was to be his home for the rest of his life, and with whose history his own was to be inseparably connected. One of his familiar and humorous stories is that of his first promenade up Market Street, eating a loaf of dry bread, and carrying a loaf under each arm. Miss Read, his future wife, saw him, "and thought I made," says he, "as I certainly did, a most awkward, ridiculous appearance." He worked with one Keimer for a time; and

becoming known as a good workman, was led by Governor Keith to go to England in order to secure equipment for a shop of his own which would do the government printing. In London Keith's name proved of no value, and Franklin was obliged to seek work at his trade for support. He was very successful at this, and attained great distinction as the "Water-American" among the beer-drinking English printers, who marveled that he was stronger than they. After eighteen months in London, he sailed for Philadelphia in July, 1726.



PORTRAIT OF FRANKLIN BY DUPLESSIS. The subject's favorite of the 600 likenesses of himself which had come under his notice.

Part in Public Affairs. — Again engaging in the printing business, he purchased three years later *The Pennsylvania Gazette*. His influence, always for good, increased. He formed a number of his most substantial friends into a society called the "Junto" — which developed into the American Philosophical Society. With the aid of the Junto he started his "first project of a public nature — that for a subscription library, — the mother of all the North American subscription libraries." In 1749 he was the moving spirit in the foundation of an academy, which six years later received a charter raising it to collegiate grade, and subsequently became the University of

Pennsylvania. Among other results of his activity for the public good were the paving of the Philadelphia streets, the organization of a regular police force and a fire department, and the establishment of a state militia.

After 1748 he took no active part in business, "having taken a very able, industrious, and honest partner," who managed the concern successfully for eighteen years. By this move "I flattered myself," says Franklin, "that I had found leisure during the rest of my life for philosophical studies and amusements; but the public laid hold of me for their purposes." He was appointed or elected magistrate, councilman, assemblyman, postmaster-general, delegate to the Albany Congress in 1754,[1] colonial agent in England and in France, member of the Second Continental Congress, and member of the Constitutional Convention. He has the distinction of being the only man who signed the four most important documents of our country, — the Declaration of Independence, the Treaty of Alliance with France, the Treaty of Peace with England, and the Constitution.

It is interesting to note that, though Franklin's services to the colonies were inestimable, he was out of the country during the war and during the greater part of the twenty years preceding it. From 1757 to 1762 he represented Pennsylvania in England; from 1764 to 1775, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Massachusetts, and Georgia; and from 1776 to 1783 he was ambassador to France from the United States of America. He was uniformly and eminently successful in every public office he held, and on his foreign missions achieved great social triumphs. On his return to Pennsylvania in 1785 he was chosen governor of the state, and two

[1] Franklin drew up a plan of union, which was rejected by the colonies because "there was too much *prerogative* in it," and by the mother country because there was "too much of the *democratic*." — *Autobiography*, Chap. X.

years later was an influential member of the body that framed the Constitution. This was his last public service, and was performed faithfully despite the fact that he was not only in poor health, incident to old age, but was suffering constant, severe pain.

"Whilst the last members were signing" [the Constitution], says James Madison,[1] "Doctor Franklin, looking towards the president's chair, at the back of which a rising sun happened to be painted, observed to a few members near him, that painters had found it difficult to distinguish in their art, a rising, from a setting sun. 'I have,' said he, 'often and often, in the course of the session, and the vicissitudes of my hopes and fears as to its issue, looked at that behind the President without being able to tell whether it was rising or setting; but now at length, I have the happiness to know, that it is a rising, and not a setting sun.'" The sun of Franklin's life, on the contrary, was approaching its setting; and the end came April 17, 1790, a month before the last state signed the Constitution. At his death Congress went into mourning for one month, and the French Assembly addressed a letter of condolence to the American people.

First Literary Efforts. — The above outline of Franklin's life gives little hint of why he has a place in literature, and no writings of his have been mentioned except the *Autobiography* and *The Way to Wealth.* He was, however, a voluminous writer, and on a wide range of subjects. His first publications appeared while he was still a boy (1722) — a series of fourteen letters written to his brother James's newspaper, signed "Silence Dogood." The substance of them was inspired by Mather's essays,[2] and the style by Addison's *Spectator.*

"Mrs. Dogood" introduces herself in the first papers as a

[1] In his *Journal of the Constitutional Convention.*

[2] See above, page 18.

"courteous and affable, good-humored and handsome, and sometimes witty" widow, not unwilling to change her state, "an enemy to vice, . . . jealous for the liberties of my country," and inclined "to reprove the faults of others"; and then proceeds to satirize some of the foibles and vices of the town (Boston). She ridicules pride, popular poetry, hypocrites, fanciful philanthropic schemes, drunkenness, and so on. These papers are important to us chiefly as showing how early Franklin acquired something of the simplicity and purity of style, the characteristic humor, and the interest in matters of more than personal importance which marked his whole career.

The *Dogood Papers*, however, reached no great audience and probably had little influence. Nor can more be said of the *Busy-Body* pieces written in 1729, for the express purpose of driving an unfair competitor out of business. This they accomplished, but they show no advance in literary merit over their predecessors. Though Franklin continued to write under his own as well as under various assumed names and on a variety of subjects, big and little, it was not until the appearance of his *Almanac* that he became something of an influence in the colony.

"**Poor Richard's Almanac.**" — Begun in 1732, under the name of "Richard Saunders," the *Almanac* circulated largely, made money for its author, and was thought to have "its share of influence," says Franklin, "in producing that growing plenty of money which was observable for several years after its publication." This was due, doubtless, to the proverbs or maxims scattered through the book, being "chiefly such as inculcated industry and frugality." While in substance they were the world's wisdom and not Franklin's, it was in his phraseology that they became current; and no one should feel any hesitation in calling them *original*, — a term, which, as Lowell observes, "is never

absolute." The proverbs, scattered through the issues of the *Almanac* for sixteen years, obtained still greater currency through their collection in the preface of 1758, the "Father Abraham's Speech" mentioned above. It is in this form also that they have become so familiar to the succeeding generations. Almost any American boy or girl of a dozen years can finish, "Early to bed and . . .," "A small leak will . . .," "Constant dropping . . .," "Experience keeps a dear school but . . ."

It would be impossible to give in our small space quotations or summaries adequately characterizing the body of Franklin's writings. One of the many collections of his manuscripts, that of the American Philosophical Society, numbers 13,000 documents, "comprising," says Professor

Poor RICHARD improved:

BEING AN

ALMANACK

AND

EPHEMERIS

OF THE

MOTIONS of the SUN and MOON;

THE TRUE

PLACES and ASPECTS of the PLANETS;

THE

RISING and *SETTING* of the *SUN*

AND THE

Rising, Setting *and* Southing *of the* Moon,

FOR THE

YEAR of our LORD 1758:

Being the Second after LEAP-YEAR.

Containing alſo,

The Inundations, Conjunctions, Eclipſes, Judgment of the Weather, Riſing and Setting of the Planets, Length of Days and Nights, Fairs, Courts, Roads, *&c.* Together with uſeful Tables, chronological Obſervations, and entertaining Remarks.

Fitted to the Latitude of Forty Degrees, and a Meridian of near five Hours Weſt from *London*; but may, without ſenſible Error, ſerve all the NORTHERN COLONIES.

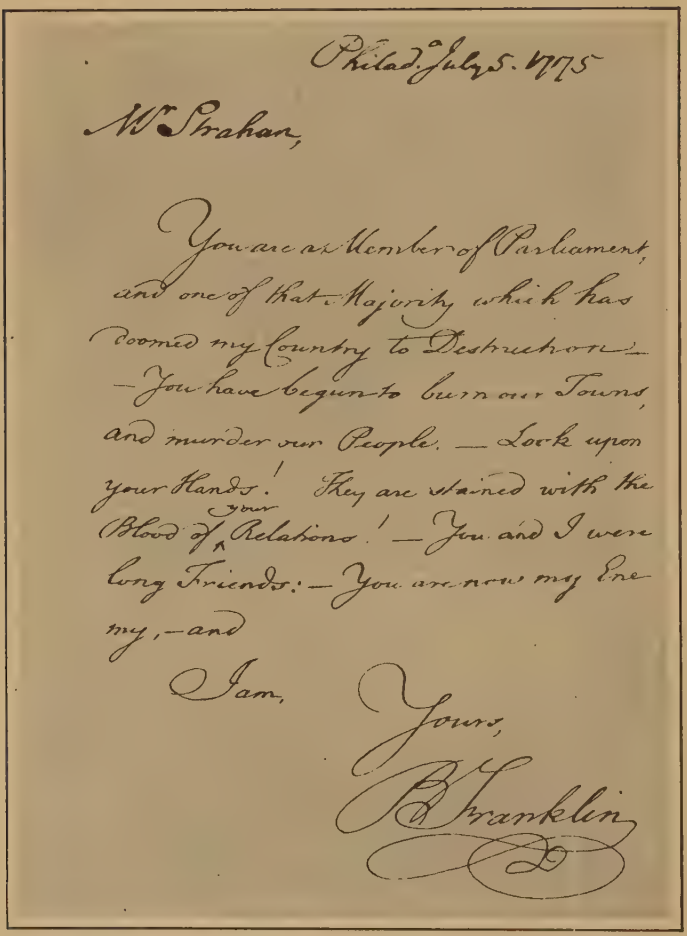
By *RICHARD SAUNDERS*, Philom.

PHILADELPHIA:

Printed and Sold by B. FRANKLIN, and D. HALL.

TITLE-PAGE OF *Poor Richard's Almanac* FOR 1758, the Issue in which Poor Richard's "Sayings" were first collected.

(Courtesy of the Library of Congress.)



Philad.a July 5. 1775

W.m Strahan,

You are a Member of Parliament, and one of that Majority which has doomed my Country to Destruction. — You have begun to burn our Towns, and murder our People. — Look upon your Hands! They are stained with the Blood of your Relations! — You and I were long Friends: — You are now my Enemy, — and

I am,

Yours,

B Franklin

FACSIMILE OF A LETTER OF FRANKLIN'S WHICH WAS NEVER SENT.
(Library of Congress.)

Smyth, "a correspondence carried on in nine languages with all the world, and dealing with every theory of philosophy and every scheme of politics familiar and unfamiliar in the eighteenth century."[1]

Political Writings. — Of his many political pieces the *Causes of the American Discontents before 1768* is an excellent example of Franklin's serious vein, and the *Edict of the King of Prussia* of his satiric. In the former, professing to write as "an impartial historian of American facts and opinions," he cites as causes of the unfortunate conditions in America: first, the various forms of taxation following the repeal of the Stamp Act; second, the restrictions on the colonists' trade; third, the multiplicity of obnoxious officials; and lastly, the emptying of British prisons into the settlements.[2] It was not published in London exactly as written; indeed Franklin wrote to his son that the editor had "drawn the teeth and pared the nails of my paper so that it can neither scratch nor bite."

In the *Edict* the Prussian monarch is represented as laying claim to Britain, and making demands for long-neglected tribute and acknowledgment of Prussia's authority over the island. These demands "will be thought just and reasonable" by the "colonists" in Britain, says he, since they are in accord with numerous statutes of Parliament, and with "resolutions of both houses, entered into for the good government of their *own colonies in Ireland and America*." (Italics are Franklin's.) The *Edict*, published in a London magazine, was accepted by many for a time as genuine, and occasioned great indignation; but discovery of its real character produced no effect in Britain beyond a recognition of

[1] *Writings of Benjamin Franklin*, I, viii.

[2] This refers to the practice of sending prisoners to America as indentured servants — *i.e.* each bound to a master for a specified term of years.

its justice by some far-seeing minds, and a general conviction that America meant fight.

Lighter Works. — Most readers agree that when Franklin had as his chief aim in writing, not to gain some practical end, but merely to entertain, he is not altogether successful. Of the inconsiderable number of pieces of this type, *The Whistle* is perhaps the favorite. This is a letter to Madame Brillon, a clever Frenchwoman, whose family were great admirers of Franklin, and were never weary of entertaining and being entertained and instructed by the American ambassador. *The Whistle*, based on a boyhood experience of the writer when he gave four times its worth for an instrument of torment to his household, is a humorous moral discourse on bad bargains.

The work of Franklin the scientist is too well known to call for much remark. It seems sufficient to give the evidence of the value put upon his discoveries, especially in electricity, by the learned world. Yale and Harvard conferred upon him the degree of Master of Arts; the universities of Oxford, Edinburgh, and Saint Andrews, that of Doctor of Laws; he was made a Fellow of the Royal Society without application by him — a very unusual proceeding — and without payment of fees; and the Copley gold medal, conferred annually for the most important discovery in natural philosophy, was awarded to him in 1753.

From even this brief sketch it can be seen that, whether viewed as author, scientist, statesman, or practical business man, Franklin fills a large place in the history of our country. One is inclined to doubt whether with fewer occupations he would have made a greater name in literature. He wrote less effectively, because less naturally, when he had not some *practical* object in mind, such as inculcating industry and frugality in his neighbors, or inspiring his descendants by the story of his life, or presenting the colonial view

of things to the mother country. Since the vast majority of his writings, however, had these practical objects, it is fair to judge and place him by them. The distinguished English critic, Matthew Arnold, said to New England audiences as late as 1884, that Franklin and Emerson are "the most distinctively and honourably American of your writers; they are the most original and the most valuable."

THE ORATORS

It has been noted that oratory was one of the chief literary forms of the Revolution. The fact is not surprising. "Times that try men's souls" are likely to find expression by word of mouth. Moreover, the colonists were deeply interested in the literature produced in Parliament, and naturally gave more time and thought to the speeches of Burke and Fox than to the writings of Goldsmith and Johnson. The stately and measured style of the orators of this period clearly shows that they followed English models. Massachusetts and Virginia held the leadership in this field. The conspicuous names in Massachusetts are James Otis, Samuel and John Adams, Dr. Joseph Warren, John Hancock, and Josiah Quincy. Of these Otis was the first in time, the most striking figure, and may be taken as typical of the New Englanders.

James Otis (1725–1783). — Otis's part in the development of the spirit of American independence covers a short time, but is of great importance. Though we can hardly say, with John Adams, that "American independence was born" when Otis delivered his most famous speech, we must admit that both his example and his words carried great weight with the people, not only of Massachusetts, but of all the colonies. Otis was a Harvard graduate, who studied law and began to practice in Plymouth. At the age of

twenty-five he moved to Boston, and immediately took a high place in his profession. He became Advocate-General of the Crown, but resigned in 1761 because he would not defend the writs of assistance — a duty belonging to the office. He was thereupon chosen to assist in the attack on them, and it is upon fragmentary reports of his speech on that occasion that his fame as an orator largely rests.

OLD STATE HOUSE, BOSTON.

It dates from 1748, and its outer walls from 1712. The lion and unicorn of the British arms remain at the corners of the roof.

These writs were search-warrants, originally issued, as Otis shows, to *specified* officials, giving them authority to search *specified* houses for certain *specified* goods suspected of being concealed. The objection raised by the colonists was to the issuance of a writ to any petty officer, who might give or sell it to any individual, who might search the house of any other individual against whom he might have a grievance or even a grudge. The fragment of Otis's speech left to us contains one clause that has passed into a proverb: "A man's house is his castle." The legal argument is convincing, the character of the man is attractive, the English is that of a cultured Massachusetts gentleman. If we fail to be daz-

zled by the "flame of fire" (Adams's phrase describing Otis before the Court), we must recall that all oratory loses when committed to ink and paper, and that in this instance we have the additional difficulty of judging a five-hour speech by a ten-minute fragment.

Of Southern orators the most distinguished were John Rutledge and Chief Justice Drayton, of South Carolina, and Edmund Randolph, Richard Henry Lee, and Patrick Henry, of Virginia. Of these Patrick Henry was easily the greatest, considered strictly as an orator.

Patrick Henry (1736–1799). — Henry received a meager education, and failed at farming and "store keeping." At

ST. JOHN'S CHURCH, RICHMOND.

Where Henry delivered his famous speech before the Virginia Convention. The church was built in 1740, and some tombstones in the yard date back to 1751.

the age of twenty-four he studied law for a short time, and was admitted to the bar on the understanding with the examiners that he would shortly "learn some essential points." He soon attained success and popularity as a lawyer, and in 1765 was elected to the House of Burgesses. During his first year in that body he became conspicuous by a speech

INTERIOR OF ST. JOHN'S.
The Henry pew (just forward of the window on the left) is marked by a brass plate placed by the Old Dominion Chapter of the Daughters of the Revolution in 1910.

against the Stamp Act, which concludes with the familiar "Cæsar had his Brutus" passage. Ten years later, in the Virginia convention, held in old St. John's Church, Richmond, he delivered what was probably his greatest speech, reaching its climax in the sentiment not by any means general at the time: "I know not what course others may take; but as for me, give me liberty, or give me death!"

This speech has been called Henry's individual declaration of war. It resulted in the unanimous adoption of resolutions he offered, and in his appointment as chairman of the committee to provide means of defense for the colony. Other honors conferred upon him were several terms in the legislature and five as governor. He declined a sixth term as governor, election to the United States Senate, a place in Washington's Cabinet, the chief-justiceship of the Supreme Court, and appointment by John Adams as minister to France. The last five years of his life were spent in retirement.

Thomas Paine (1737–1809). — With the orators should be classified the political pamphleteers, of whom the most influential during the Revolution was Thomas Paine, an Englishman and a Quaker, who, after a checkered career at home, landed in Philadelphia on the eve of the war, November 30, 1774. He brought letters of introduction from Franklin, and rapidly made friends.

In less than thirteen months after his arrival he published anonymously *Common Sense*, a vigorous presentation of the American cause, which is credited by some with large influence on the Declaration of Independence six months afterwards. "A government of our own is our natural right," wrote Paine. "I challenge the warmest advocate for reconciliation to show a single advantage that this continent can reap by being connected with Great Britain." "Since nothing but blows will do, for God's sake let us come to a final separation." Though comparatively few colonial leaders had been prepared a year earlier to follow Henry to "liberty or death," Paine's pamphlet roused the rank and file of the people from Massachusetts to Georgia. Within three months a number of editions, amounting to over 100,000 copies, had been printed and circulated in America. "A wonderful production"— "a masterly, irresistible per-

formance"— the writer "deserves a statue of gold"— "in unison with the sentiments and feelings of the people": — such phrases give some idea of the reception accorded this radical expression of anti-British feeling.

Paine followed *Common Sense* with a series of sixteen

PAINE'S HOMESTEAD AT NEW ROCHELLE, NEW YORK.
New York State gave him the farm of 275 acres, Pennsylvania gave him $2500, Congress $3800. The house was moved in 1910 to a spot within a few yards of Paine's grave and monument.

papers called *The Crisis*. The first number, beginning with "These are the times that try men's souls"— another American proverb to be placed with Otis's quoted above, was written during the disorderly retreat of the army across New Jersey in December, 1776. It was by no means de-

liberately argumentative as was his first production; and it descends in places to hot-headed invective, as, for instance, when he compares George III to a "common murderer, a highwayman, or a house-breaker." But in the words of Woodrow Wilson, it "swung men to its humor," as did the succeeding papers, which appeared at irregular intervals to the close of the war in 1783. "His infallible instinct for interpreting to the public its own conscience and its own consciousness," says Tyler, was the secret of his power. He served the country well in the field, and obtained supplies and a large loan from France at a critical hour. His greatest service, however, to the cause of independence was with his pen, from which, under the most adverse conditions, including poverty, came stirring and inspiring words that went straight to their goal — the hearts of his adopted countrymen.

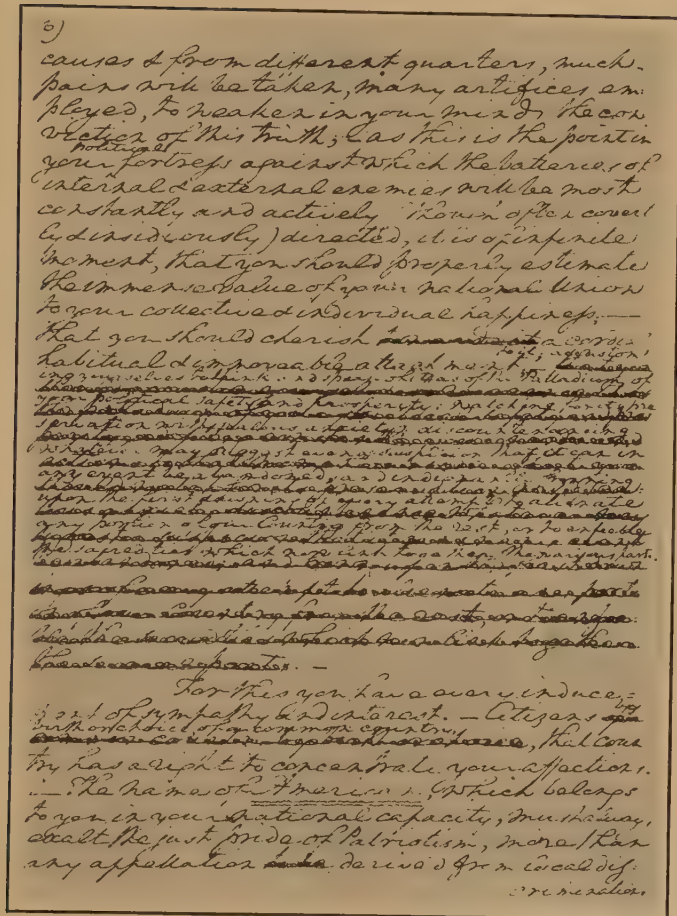
George Washington (1732–1799). — Of the life of the great leader and first president of the republic no account is needed here. The life of Washington is the history of our country from the meeting of the first Continental Congress in 1774 to his death. The niche he fills in our literature is a much smaller one.

He was, said Patrick Henry, the greatest man in the Congress of 1774 in "solid information and sound judgment," both of which qualities appear in his writings. These comprise only a large correspondence and state papers, of which the best known and in most respects the best done is the *Farewell Address* to his countrymen on leaving the presidency. His high conception of duty and his devotion to it, his modesty, his sublime trust in God, the unquestionable purity of his motives — these qualities also stand out clearly. The *First Inaugural* is a wise handling of a difficult subject, for which he had no model or precedent. His *Legacy*, a circular letter addressed to the

governors of the states on disbanding the army, and written with the expectation of retiring permanently to the repose of Mount Vernon, gives his "final blessing" to the country, to which he had already given his best thought and energies.

HOUDON'S WASHINGTON.
In the rotunda of the State Capitol at Richmond, Va.; believed by many to be the best representation of the statesman.

Washington was among the first to assert the right of the colonies to self-government. Possessing great power of self-control, he may mislead his reader into supposing he was not a man of strong feeling. But we have a fragment of a speech delivered in the Virginia Convention of 1774 which shows a fire seldom found in him except by reading between the lines. When the sufferings of Boston under the enforcement of the Port Bill were brought out, Washington rose and said: "I will raise a thousand men, subsist them at my own expense, and march with them, at their head, for the relief of Boston."



FACSIMILE OF A PAGE OF WASHINGTON'S *Farewell Address*.
Showing the extensive revision to which the whole was subjected.
(New York Public Library.)

Without the simplicity and homely wit of Franklin, without the force of Paine or the oratorical power of Henry, Washington's writings show a dignity, poise, and honesty which can never fail to attract the serious reader. They reveal, moreover, a singularly pure and beautiful character,

MOUNT VERNON.

Washington's home on the Potomac near the Capital. It was named in honor of Admiral Vernon by Lawrence Washington, George's brother, and came into George's possession by bequest in 1752.

which has stood the supreme test of a century of unimpassioned research and examination.

Thomas Jefferson (1743–1826). — Another statesman of the Revolution who is entitled to a place in our literature is Thomas Jefferson. Like Otis, and unlike Henry, Paine, and Washington, Jefferson was a college-bred man, having been graduated from William and Mary at the age of seventeen. Nine years later he began his public career as a member of the Virginia House of Burgesses, and for

the succeeding forty years (to the end of his second term as President) he was prominent and influential in both state and national affairs. From 1809 till his death he lived quietly on his beautiful estate called Monticello, a few miles from Charlottesville, subsequently the seat of the University of Virginia. The achievements of which he

MONTICELLO, HOME OF JEFFERSON.

Built after a plan of his own. It "remains to this day the confessed architectural triumph of a dreamer scarcely beyond his youth." (J. S. Patton.)

was proud are indicated by the inscription on his tomb, written by himself: "Author of the Declaration of American Independence, of the Statute of Virginia for Religious Freedom, and Father of the University of Virginia."

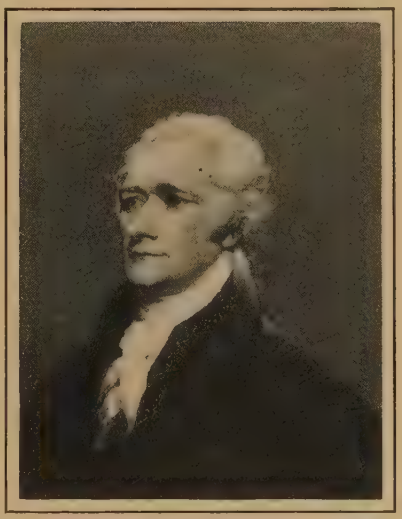
When Jefferson entered the Continental Congress in 1775, he already had some reputation as a writer and scholar. He was appointed on committees to prepare documents for

the body, and a year after its assembling he was made a member of the committee of five to prepare "*a* Declaration." John Adams and Jefferson were designated a subcommittee to draft it, and Adams insisted that the Virginian was the man to do the writing. Adams late in life spoke slightingly (if not contemptuously) of the Declaration, especially of its lack of originality. As has, however, been pointed out, it was not intended to be an original, individual document, but the expression of the American people as a whole; and there can be no question that Jefferson succeeded admirably in giving voice to feelings and wishes that had already become national.

MONUMENT AT GRAVE OF JEFFERSON.
In grounds of Monticello. The simple shaft is admirably in keeping with his character.

The personal note, which was largely absent from the *Declaration*, was heard in an earlier work, known as a *Summary View of the Rights of British America.* This paper Jefferson hoped to see adopted by the Virginia Convention as instructions to its delegates to the Colonial Congress, but was disappointed. The Americans, said he, are indebted to Britain for nothing of what they have: "for themselves they fought, for themselves they conquered, and for themselves alone they have a right to hold." And in a passage which must have been in Henry's mind the year following, Jefferson asserts that "the God that gave us life gave us liberty at the same time."

Alexander Hamilton (1757–1804). — The Empire State makes a noteworthy entrance into the literature of this period with the writings of Alexander Hamilton. Realizing the weakness of the government formed in 1779, Hamilton wrote in 1781 a series of papers called *The Continentalist*, setting forth "that it is necessary to augment the powers of the confederation." As one of the "symptoms of the evils to be apprehended" he notes that "in the midst of a war for our existence as a nation, some of the states have evaded, or refused, compliance with the demands of Congress in points of the greatest moment to the common safety." This was the beginning of his agitation for a constitution that would make a stronger union of the states, — an agitation which bore fruit in 1787.



ALEXANDER HAMILTON.
After Trumbull's portrait. Original in Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.

Hamilton's fame as a writer rests chiefly on his contributions to *The Federalist*, a series of eighty-five papers written to secure ratification of the Constitution by the State of New York. The series was planned by Hamilton, and at least fifty-one of the papers were written by him. Of the rest, fourteen were written by James Madison (afterwards President), five by John Jay (first Chief Justice of the Supreme

Court), three by Hamilton and Madison together; the authorship of twelve is uncertain. When the last paper was published, August 15, 1788, all the states except North Carolina and Rhode Island had ratified the Constitution, Hamilton's own state being the eleventh. The value of *The Federalist* may be judged by the fact that it is still the acknowledged authority on the interpretation of the Constitution. In style it shows that America had not yet gained literary independence of the mother country. In sonorousness of diction and sentence structure it emulates Johnson and Hume. In thought, however, it is an altogether original contribution to the political philosophy of the world.

Hamilton became Secretary of the Treasury under Washington, and worked out a satisfactory financial system for the new Republic. He believed in a strong central government, and thus came into conflict with Jefferson, Secretary of State, who championed state sovereignty. Two political parties were rapidly developed, the lineal descendants of which to-day rest on the fundamental principles of Jefferson and Hamilton, however much these may have become complicated with matters of detail.

REVOLUTIONARY VERSE

Times of widespread agitation and excitement do not usually express themselves through the fine arts. Even a great poet is hardly likely to produce "immortal verse" when his country is absorbed in the discussion of great questions of government; witness the few sonnets constituting the whole of Milton's poetic output during the Great Rebellion. Men will, however, at such times sing songs of defiance, and celebrate the deeds of heroes in verses which, if they are not great poetry, have the merits of spontaneity and genuine feeling.

The Revolution inspired a multitude of such productions; and a somewhat smaller number of satiric poems, which show plainly the influence of the English poets of the century. Formal satire in English poetry had its origin with Dryden (died 1700); and before the spirit of liberty manifested itself strongly in America, this form of literature had reached a high state of excellence in the writings of Swift, Gay, Johnson, Pope, and a host of smaller men. The works of these men held up to ridicule, not merely the fashions and foibles of the day, but the physical and mental shortcomings of their enemies, and even the feelings of men for things most dear to them. America produced imitations even of this last class, of which one of the most notable is Freneau's *Emancipation from British Dependence*, written as a rhymed parody of the English litany.

While there are four or five names that stand higher than the rest as versifiers, no estimate of the period's output in this line can overlook the vast number of anonymous poems, or the occasional poems of men whose vocation was quite other than literature. In the latter class should be mentioned Franklin's *The Mother Country*, Paine's *Liberty Tree*, and the less known though not less meritorious songs of Joseph Warren, physician, orator, and martyr;[1] of Judge Royall Tyler, of Vermont; and of Meshech Weare, preacher, lawyer, warrior, statesman.

The anonymous poems above referred to were thrown off in moments of intense enthusiasm caused generally by some great victory, or the contemplation of some popular hero. Paul Jones is a favorite subject in these, doubtless because of his picturesque character and career; Washington, of course, is sung by many; and less distinguished heroes, like Warren, Marion, and Nathan Hale, are celebrated by occasional rhymers. Almost every great battle had its panegyr-

[1] He fell at Bunker Hill.

ist. The comment that the unknown authorship of such poems is a blessing to the authors says merely that they count for little or nothing *as poetry*. They are, however, of unquestionable importance as evidence of the hopes, aspirations, and ideals of the people, and as such form a valuable supplement to the prose literature of the period.

Francis Hopkinson (1737–1791). — Of the chief poets of the day, the first in time is an occasional poet like those just named. This is Francis Hopkinson, lawyer, of Pennsylvania and New Jersey. He was much occupied with public affairs, serving his country as a member of the Continental Congress, as a signer of the Declaration of Independence, and as Judge. He wrote extensively in prose and verse and on a variety of subjects. His best-known prose work, a political allegory called *A Pretty Story*, is far less interesting to-day than is his ballad, *The Battle of the Kegs*, and probably was so to his contemporaries.

This political-satirical ballad "was occasioned by a real incident," according to Hopkinson. "Certain machines, in the form of kegs, charg'd with gun-powder, were sent down the river to annoy the British shipping then at Philadelphia. The danger of these machines being discovered, the British manned the wharfs and shipping, and discharged their small arms and cannons at everything they saw floating in the river during the ebb tide." It is far from being a great poem — far from being even the best Hopkinson wrote; but it is the one that brought him most fame in his day, and probably accomplished much in the way of inspiriting the colonists.

Philip Freneau (1752–1832). — One of the most meritorious of Revolutionary poets, and almost the only one who may be read to-day for his own sake, is Philip Freneau, already mentioned as a satirist. His long life was filled with varied activities and many literary efforts; but his

fame, though secure, rests on a small number of genuine poems.

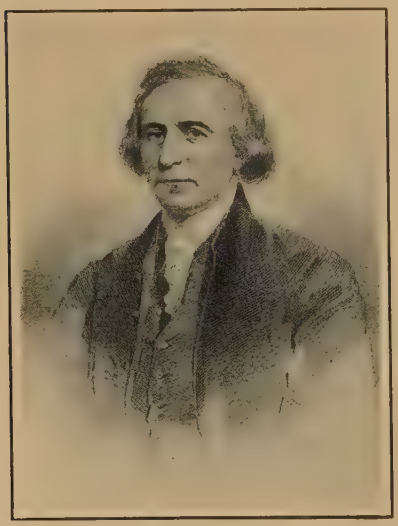
He was born in New York City. At the age of nineteen he was graduated from Princeton, in the class with James Madison. He taught school for a time after leaving college, studied law, made numerous ventures in journalism, gratified a love of the sea by various voyages (including one as a pri-

NASSAU HALL, PRINCETON.
The oldest building of the University.

vateer), and served a short term as translator for the Department of State under Jefferson. He early began to write verses, and in 1775 wrote the first of his political satires. A large number of satirical and heroic pieces came from his pen at frequent intervals from this time till the end of the War of 1812.

Freneau's war poems show little superiority over those of his contemporaries, differing chiefly in the degree of bit-

terness expressed toward everything English. He seems to have searched his dictionary for words of abuse and to have exhausted his stock in every two or three poems. In *Emancipation from British Dependence* (mentioned above), Lord North is a "caitiff," the king has a "toothful of brains," the British are successively "scoundrels," "rascals," "pirates," "banditti," "butchers." One poem in the patriotic group — that to the memory of the Americans who fell at Eutaw Springs — is free from this bitterness and coarseness, and is a dignified and noble tribute to a gallant band.



PHILIP FRENEAU.
Sometimes called the "Laureate of the Revolution."

Even *Eutaw Springs*, however, would give Freneau little claim to a firm place as a poet. It is to a very different class of poems that he owes his distinction. These are the nature poems — *The Wild Honey Suckle, On the Sleep of Plants, To a Catydid, On a Honey Bee* — in which a new note is struck for poetry in English. As a satirist, Freneau, like Hopkinson and the rest, was but following the traditions of the mother country; but in this other field he was a pioneer. Not merely in choice of subjects, but in minuteness of observation and in sincerity and accuracy of expres-

sion, Freneau deserves a high place among the score of preëminent nature poets in the language. His first collection appeared in 1786 — the year of Burns's first volume, and twelve years before the epoch-marking *Lyrical Ballads* of Wordsworth and Coleridge. In variety and fitness of rhythms, also, Freneau shows a pioneer spirit and an independence of British models. He is the first genuine poet America produced.

The "Hartford Wits." — Three poets who enjoyed great fame in their day may be grouped together because of their connection with Yale College and the city of Hartford. They were members of a larger group, known as the "Hartford Wits," who came nearer forming what is called a "school" of writers than any other body in America before or since, excepting possibly the "Transcendentalists" a half century later. Their work resembled much of their contemporaries' in tone; but the satires of Freneau, Hopkinson, and the host of lesser men were spontaneous and unpretentious, whereas those of this celebrated trio were elaborate performances, following English models. These men were John Trumbull, Timothy Dwight, and Joel Barlow.

John Trumbull (1750–1831). — Trumbull was graduated from Yale at the age of seventeen, received his Master's degree three years later, and became a tutor in the College. The field in which he made his reputation he entered during his first year as tutor, when he wrote *The Adventures of Tom Brainless.* This poem is a satire on education as then carried on in colleges, where students are

> "In the same round condemned each day
> To study, read, recite, and pray;"

and are compelled by the curriculum to

> "Gain ancient tongues and lose their own."

While connected with the College, Trumbull urged instruction in English literature and composition.

Trumbull's greatest work — and the greatest satire of the Revolutionary period — is *McFingal*, a mock-heroic poem written shortly after Bunker Hill and published in January, 1776. The title character is a Scotch-American magistrate of Tory sympathies, who lives in a town near Boston. Set over against him is Honorius — champion of the people — the figure supposed to be drawn from John Adams. Squire McFingal stands for "divine right," and insists on the folly of attempting resistance to Great Britain. Honorius appeals to the people's sense of wrong, and urges them to a united opposition of the misgovernment they have so long endured. In 1781–1782, Trumbull enlarged the poem to twice its size, concluding it with the tarring and feathering of the Squire, and the utter discomfiture of his Tory followers.

Timothy Dwight (1752–1817). — Dwight was associated with Trumbull as teacher and as author. Besides these occupations he was farmer and preacher, and for the last twenty years of his life President of Yale. Though he wrote much, both in prose and verse, including a long religious satire, *The Triumph of Infidelity*, his interest for us is due to one short poem, beginning

> "Columbia, Columbia, to glory arise,
> The queen of the world, and the child of the skies."

This song does not impress the reader of to-day as a very spirited production; but its mere preservation, when so many similar poems have disappeared, shows that it held a place in the people's hearts somewhat like that held by Paine's *Crisis*. In one respect Dwight's poem deserves a higher place than Paine's essay, inasmuch as it looks beyond its own day of strife to an illustrious future for America.

Joel Barlow (1754–1812). — Barlow, the youngest of the "big three," is remembered for his *Vision of Columbus*, a pretentious patriotic poem expanded twenty years later (1807) into an epic called *The Columbiad*. In this poem Columbus is taken from prison to a hill, where he has a vision of the America-to-be. It is written in heroic couplets, the standard metrical form of eighteenth century England,

YALE COLLEGE.
From an old print.

and in a high-sounding polysyllabic vocabulary which suggests, if it is not actually modeled on, that of England's literary dictator, the great Samuel Johnson.

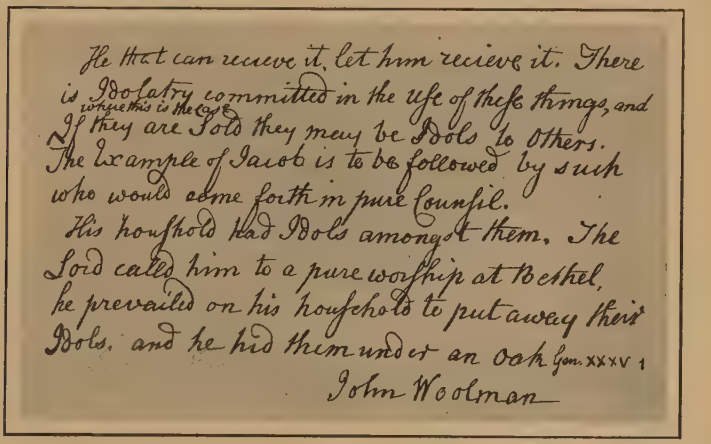
The satisfaction with which writings like those of the three men just treated were received by their contemporaries may be gathered from some *Lines Addressed to Dwight and Barlow* by Trumbull. They are invited to

"join the sons of song,
And scorn the censures of the envious throng;
Prove to the world, in these new-dawning skies,
What genius kindles and what arts arise;
All Virtue's friends are yours. Disclose the lays;
Your country's heroes claim the debt of praise;
Fame shall assent, and future years admire.
Barlow's strong flight, and Dwight's Homeric fire."

Whatever shortcomings the verses of these men may show, their patriotism is manifest and admirable. Barlow, moreover, served his country well in other ways, notably while, at great personal sacrifice, he was consul at Algiers. His death was caused by exposure when he was on his way to meet Napoleon, having accepted reluctantly and only from a sense of duty appointment as commissioner to the French emperor.

John Woolman (1720–1772). — One interesting book written during the storm and stress of the pre-Revolution days shows none of the agitation of soul or the enthusiasm of the other writers discussed in this chapter. This is the *Journal* of John Woolman, a Quaker tailor of New Jersey, which was strongly commended by such men as the American Channing and the Englishman Charles Lamb. The existence of slavery in America distressed Woolman far more than did the tyranny of the mother country; and he gave his life to working up a sentiment for emancipation. His *Journal* lives, not for any great literary merit it possesses, but for the pure and self-sacrificing character it portrays. In simplicity and sincerity this autobiographic record equals Franklin's, and in loftiness of spirit far surpasses it. We never hear of Poor Richard's going home "under a humbling sense of the gracious dealings of the Lord" with him; nor does he ever say or imply that "the fear of the Lord so covered me at times, that my way was made easier than I expected."

The two men who remain to be considered in this chapter are distinctly set off from most of the writers contemporary with them, in that they were from first to last purely literary men. Neither of them seems to have been at all concerned with the great movements of their times; and their works belong to the realm of art only, even though they may


He that can recieve it, let him recieve it. There
is Idolatry committed in the use of these things, and
where this is the case
If they are Sold they may be Idols to Others.
The Example of Jacob is to be followed by such
who would come forth in pure Counsil.
His houshold had Idols amongst them. The
Lord called him to a pure worship at Bethel,
he prevailed on his houshold to put away their
Idols. and he hid them under an Oak Gen. XXXV 1
John Woolman

FACSIMILE OF A MEDITATION OF JOHN WOOLMAN ON THE USE OF SILVER VESSELS.

(Courtesy of Dr. Arthur Beardsley, Librarian of the Friends' Historical Library, Swarthmore College. Photograph by Prof. G. A. Hoadley.)

not occupy very high places in that realm. These men, already mentioned as our first dramatist and our first novelist, are Thomas Godfrey and Charles Brockden Brown.

Thomas Godfrey (1736–1763) had a short and troubled life. When he was thirteen years of age, his father, the Thomas Godfrey of Franklin's "Junto," died. The boy, who had shown taste for study and especially for poetry, was then taken from school and put to a trade. When he became of age, he left this occupation, served a short time in the

Pennsylvania militia, and then went into business in North Carolina. Here four years later he died of fever, at the age of twenty-seven. His writings, collected and published in Philadelphia in 1765, consist of a small number of lyrics, a poem of 500 lines modeled on Chaucer and Pope and called *The Court of Fancy*, and a tragedy, *The Prince of Parthia*. In one of his lyrics, *The Wish*, Godfrey bespeaks for himself the place which he seems to have obtained:

> "I only ask a mod'rate fate,
> And tho' not in obscurity,
> I would not yet be placed too high;
> Between the two extremes I'd be,
> Not meanly low, nor yet too great,
> From both contempt and envy free."

It is possibly true that Godfrey's name is kept alive by the sentimental interest attaching to the author of the first drama written in America. Its scene, as the title indicates, is laid in the East, and the play itself is of little intrinsic merit. The story concerns the love of the king (Artabanus) and his two sons (Arsaces and Vardanes) for the beautiful captive (Evanthe); and the consequent jealousy and intrigues of these three and the queen (Thermusa). In the end Artabanus is murdered, Evanthe takes poison, and Arsaces (her betrothed) dies by his own hand. The story lacks originality, the language and versification furnish much evidence of imitation; yet the play has some strong scenes, and is, in the opinion of Professor Tyler, "a noble beginning of dramatic literature in America."

Beyond this distinction as dramatist, Godfrey shows real lyric power. The song in *The Prince of Parthia*, Act V, beginning

> "Tell me, Phyllis, tell me why,
> You appear so wondrous coy,"

and the juvenile compositions addressed to Celia, Amyntor, and Corinna, give quite as much promise as does the drama. They contain many suggestions of his English masters of the seventeenth century — Herrick, Wither, and the Cavalier Poets, but they are far from being servile copies.

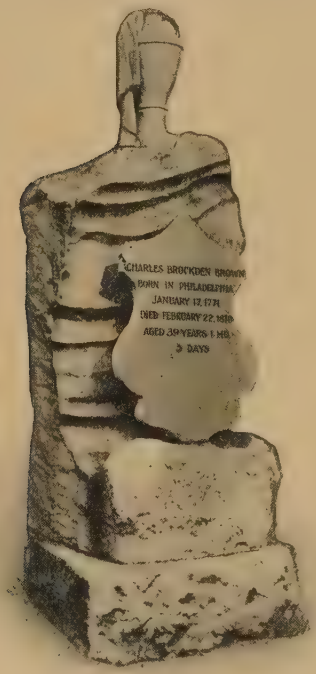
CHARLES BROCKDEN BROWN, 1771–1810

A Romancer of Distinction. — Charles Brockden Brown performed his literary work with the handicap, not of poverty or lack of education, but of a delicate constitution. His career, like the careers of Godfrey, Paine, Franklin, and Hopkinson, belongs to Philadelphia, and he used that city and the country surrounding it as scenes for his novels. It is with these works only that the student of Brown is concerned, though he wrote political essays, magazine criticism, and much other hack-work.

The novels or romances, six in number, were written between 1798 and 1801. Their titles are: *Wieland, or, The Transformation; Arthur Mervyn, or, Memories of the Year 1793; Edgar Huntly, or, Memoirs of a Sleep Walker; Ormond, or, The Secret Witness; Clara Howard, or, The Enthusiasm of Love;* and *Jane Talbot.* Brown was not the first American to write novels, but he was the first to attain distinction in this line, and he is the only one before Cooper whose works are of importance to-day.

These stories have many points in common. They are so loosely put together that it is actually difficult to follow the development of the plot. They are tragic stories, full of the mysterious and the terrible. On the side of style they are marked by objectionable mannerisms both in vocabulary and sentence structure. Most of the characters are not only complex, but puzzling — we find them difficult to understand. Against these faults, however, may be set some

positive merits. Brown narrates single incidents with telling effect; and in spite of long-drawn-out passages he holds the reader's interest throughout. He gave the American Indian a place in romantic fiction. His stories have a uniformly high moral tone. It is also to his credit that he had sufficient confidence in his ability and in the public to adopt literature as his profession — he was the first American to do this.



CENOTAPH OF CHARLES BROCKDEN BROWN.
In Laurel Hill Cemetery, Philadelphia.

Plots. — The character of the stories may be indicated briefly. The plot of *Wieland* turns on the exercise of the power of ventriloquism, which through the mere heedlessness of the possessor causes wife-murder, madness, and suicide. *Arthur Mervyn* and *Ormond* are chiefly concerned with yellow fever epidemics in Philadelphia and New York, with all the horrors of poor hospitals, incompetent attendants, and criminally ignorant and negligent officials. *Edgar Huntly* (subtitle, "Memoirs of a Sleep Walker") deals

really with *two* sleep walkers, both of whom go through extraordinary and mysterious adventures, and one of whom, like Wieland, ends his stormy career in madness and suicide. The element of suspense is strong, and surprises are frequent.

Style. — Among his mannerisms of style is the over-frequent use of certain favorite words, often in unusual senses. An example that will strike the reader of any of these stories is "bereave." The hero of *Edgar Huntly* is "bereaved" of the use of his limbs, "bereaved" of sense, "bereaved of strength," "bereaved of the power to walk"; and an Indian he shoots is "bereaved of sensation though not of life." In other stories persons are "bereft" of all satisfaction, of understanding, of activity, of affectionate regards, etc. Another mannerism is a wearisome tendency to what may be called the polysyllabic style. "It was obvious to conclude that his disease was pestilential"; "His aspect was embellished with good nature, though indicative of ignorance"; "He promised to maintain with me an epistolary intercourse." Of Brown's most noticeable peculiarity in sentence structure — an excessive use of the rhetorical question, especially in series — a single example will suffice. "How, I asked, might he regard her claims? In what light would he consider that engagement of the understanding, rather than of the heart, into which I had entered? How far would he esteem it proper to adhere to it? and what efforts might he make to dissolve it?"

Brown's Literary Value. — One errs in attributing to Brown, as does the writer of the "Memoir" prefixed to *Wieland*, "superior genius and profound knowledge." The reader who comes to any one of Brown's romances expecting to find either of these will be disappointed. He will find a gloomy and sometimes exciting story, of peculiar if not puzzling people, who talk in rather high-flown language, and

whose conversation is often enigmatical. He will find a narrative that "gets going" in fewer pages than do many of Cooper's or Scott's, and that seldom lets the reader's interest flag. If he brings to the reading a recollection of the times in which the author wrote, the romance will gain the additional interest that attaches to all pioneer or independent work. The novel as a literary form was young in England, and in America still in its infancy. Few Americans had written literature for its own sake. Add to these circumstances the fact that the English poet Shelley and his wife were admittedly influenced by Brown, and the probability that Poe and Hawthorne were also, and it will be seen that he has an importance in literature on other than historical grounds.

CHAPTER III

FROM IRVING TO THE END OF THE CIVIL WAR, 1809–1865

Introduction. — According to Brander Matthews "it would be possible to maintain the thesis that American literature began in 1809 with the publication of Irving's *Knickerbocker's History of New York.*" This is true only if one takes literature in the restricted sense mentioned on page 1; and elsewhere Professor Matthews admits that "not a few of the early state papers of our country have literary merit in a high degree." If we omitted from our literary history the authors of the *Declaration of Independence, The Crisis, The Federalist, Liberty or Death,* we should be unable to defend the inclusion of several names found in the present chapter. Webster and Lincoln hold a higher place in literature, doubtless, than do Jefferson and Hamilton; but no one of the four was much concerned with "beauty of form or emotional effect." They addressed the intellect as "a clear, cold, logic engine"; yet Irving, Cooper, Bryant, Poe, and Hawthorne are not more sure of places in American literature of this period than are Webster and Lincoln.

Literature as well as politics — indeed, the whole life of the American people down to the end of 1865 — was dominated by the slavery question. Not only in the halls of Congress does this appear. Poetry and fiction were devoted to abolition; the lyceum platform took it up; journalism of every kind was given over to it; newspapers and magazines

came into existence solely to attack slavery. The defense of the institution was left to the orators, who *formally* defended, not slavery, but a principle of government. The discussion involved a question which had divided the very founders of the government, as noted above in our sketch of Hamilton. This question was whether the United States of America was a league of sovereign states, or an indissoluble union of the people. On this question the country divided in such a way as to involve even purely literary men. Poe thought he saw in Lowell's *Fable for Critics* a criticism of the South; and there is no doubt that Hawthorne's death was hastened by grief over the war.

With the entrance of Irving, "the first ambassador whom the New World of Letters sent to the Old,"[1] American literature takes its place among the literatures of the world. It does not, of course, rank with that of the mother country, or of the leading nations of Europe; but from this time it claimed writers and writings which are received with enthusiasm in the older countries. When Irving received an honorary degree at Oxford, the auditorium rang with shouts of "Geoffrey Crayon!" "Diedrich Knickerbocker!" "Rip Van Winkle!" Emerson, Poe, and Cooper were all acclaimed by England, and the last two by France, as names destined to permanent high places in literature. From the time of the *Sketch Book* there were several answers to the contemptuous query of Sydney Smith, an English critic, "Who reads an American book?"

English literature during the first quarter of the nineteenth century attained an excellence surpassed only by the great Elizabethan age. It was the age of Romanticism, of which the chief characteristics were a revolt against tradition, a breaking away from the hard and fast rules of the eighteenth century, an emphasis on individuality. Words-

[1] Thackeray, in *Nil Nisi Bonum.*

worth, the philosopher-poet of Nature; Byron and Shelley, poets of social rebellion; Scott, the great historical romancer; Lamb, Hazlitt, DeQuincey, writers of new kinds of essays: — these men and many others who made the age great had little in common but "an impatience of routine thinking." This phrase was first used of the so-called "transcendental" movement in America, which was really but a belated manifestation of the English Romantic movement. Some of the American writers show resemblances to these English ones — Bryant to Wordsworth, for example, and Cooper to Scott; but they were American to the bone, and it is a great mistake to lay stress on the resemblances.

It has been said that American literature even of this period falls below that of England. The fact hardly calls for comment. The best thought of America was concerning itself with "one of the greatest political experiments in the history of the world"; and in America "literature and the elegant arts [had to] grow up side by side with the coarser plants of daily necessity; and [had to] depend for their culture on hours and seasons snatched from the pursuit of worldly interests by intelligent and public-spirited individuals." So wrote Irving in 1819. It is no small cause for pride that with such drawbacks to accomplishment in the fine arts America should, by the middle of the century, have given half a score of names to the roll of the world's great literary figures.

WASHINGTON IRVING, 1783–1859

The "Knickerbocker" Writers. — In the early colonial days, as we have seen, New England and Virginia held the undisputed supremacy in such literature as America produced. Near the middle of the eighteenth century the Middle States came into prominence with Franklin, and Phila-

delphia was the literary center for about fifty years. With Irving the leadership shifts again; and for a quarter of a century New York City takes the place of Philadelphia. Irving, Bryant, and Cooper were the chief of the "Knickerbocker Writers," whom we must consider before taking up the literature of the slavery struggle. The designation applied to this group comes from "Diedrich Knickerbocker," the pretended author of Irving's comic history of New York, to be discussed a few pages later. Says Warner: "This little man in knee-breeches and cocked hat was the germ of the whole 'Knickerbocker legend,' a fantastic creation, which in a manner took the place of history, and stamped upon the commercial metropolis of the New World the indelible Knickerbocker name and character; and even now in the city it is an undefined patent of nobility to trace descent from 'an old Knickerbocker family.'" Of the Knickerbockers, Irving was first in point of age and first to appear as author.

WASHINGTON IRVING.
The "Father of American Literature."

Irving Begins Writing Early. — Washington Irving was born in New York, April 3, 1783, nearly eight months be-

fore its evacuation by the British. At the age of sixteen, after a very aimless, unrestricted childhood, he entered a law office, and began reading — anything but law, for which he had no taste. Three years afterwards he took a position in the employ of a Mr. Hoffman, whose name we shall hear again. In the same year he began, though he little suspected it, his literary career, writing for his brother Peter's *Morning Chronicle* a series of satirical letters on the theaters of the day over the signature "Jonathan Oldstyle." While these compositions are admittedly imitations of Addison, while they fell far short of the excellence of Irving's later works, and while they do not proclaim a new genius, they are clever "take-offs" on the foibles of actors and audiences, and are to-day entertaining reading for their own sake.

Europe; "Salmagundi." — From May, 1804, to February, 1806, Irving was in Europe. He spent time enough in each place visited to make the acquaintance of the notable personages there, and was well received everywhere. Returning, he continued his social triumphs, not only in his native New York, but in Philadelphia, Baltimore, and Washington as well. Shortly after his return, Irving's second literary venture was begun, a semimonthly periodical written in conjunction with his brother William and James K. Paulding, and called *Salmagundi*,[1] *or, The Whimwhams and Opinions of Launcelot Langstaff, Esq., and Others.* Its intention was "simply to instruct the young, reform the old, correct the town, and castigate the age," by presenting "a striking picture of the town." It was a great success, but is rather dull reading to-day. Again imitating the *Spectator*, Irving is less entertaining than that publication or even than his own *Oldstyle*, chiefly because his sketches run to too great

[1] A *salmagundi* was originally an Italian salad. As used by Irving it means a medley or miscellany.

length. Twenty numbers of *Salmagundi* were published, after which it was discontinued without a stated reason.

"**Knickerbocker's History.**" — In December, 1809, appeared *A History of New York, by Diedrich Knickerbocker*, the work which established Irving's position as a writer, and which brought American literature the recognition abroad already referred to (page 70). Planned as a parody on a learned *Picture of New York*, published shortly before, it took shape in the author's mind as an independent work. Irving led up to its publication in an altogether original manner. For some weeks in advance notices were inserted in a New York paper setting forth that "a small elderly gentleman . . . by the name of Knickerbocker" had left his lodgings in the city without paying his bill; that the landlord believed the old man "not entirely in his right mind"; that he had left in his room "a very curious kind of a written book," which the landlord intended to sell unless the owner returned and settled his account.

Although the *History* begins with the creation of the world, the main portion of it is, in Irving's words, "a comic history of the city" during "the period of the Dutch domination"; and the chief object of it was "to embody the traditions of our city in an amusing form; to illustrate its local humors, customs and peculiarities." Thus it will be seen that it was not very different in substance from the *Oldstyle Letters* or *Salmagundi*. To give it a more realistic appearance it was dedicated to the New York Historical Society. While some readers were puzzled at first, the real character of the book soon became plain, and it met with immediate and phenomenal success, in England as well as in America, Sir Walter Scott being one of the first great writers across the water to express high appreciation of it.

Before the *Knickerbocker History* was published, Irving experienced a great sorrow, from which he never wholly

recovered. This was the death of his fiancée, Matilda Hoffman, daughter of the attorney in whose office he had been employed for a time. Miss Hoffman was, according to all testimony, a thoroughly attractive and admirable girl, and her marriage with Irving only awaited his choice of a vocation that promised a living. All admired her; says he: "I idolized her." For a time Irving was inconsolable, seemed more than ever unable to settle on a career; and even the remarkable success of *Knickerbocker* did not fix his determination to enter the field of letters.

Second Trip to Europe. — For the ensuing six years he did nothing systematic, remunerative, or likely to increase his reputation. He became a partner with his brothers in business on terms which gave him little work and a living; he wrote a biographical sketch of the English poet Campbell; he edited for a while a magazine in which some of the *Sketch Book* essays appeared. In May, 1815, he went abroad for a short visit, but remained seventeen years.

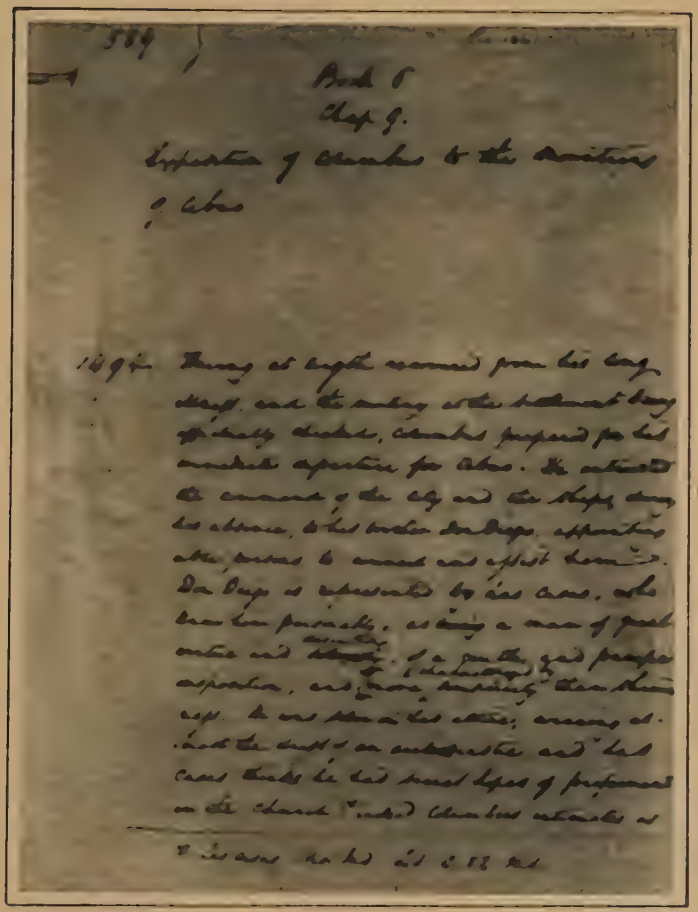
The first five years were spent in England, during which time his firm failed, and his career was settled. Declining several positions on English magazines, he went to London, and began work at his own risk. After the success of the *Sketch Book* in America (1819), which "almost appalled" him, he brought it out in England, where it sold nearly as well as in his own country. His literary success was followed by the same social success that he had met with elsewhere. Like Lowell at a later period, and unlike Hawthorne, Irving made the acquaintance of great men and women everywhere, and became a general favorite. In Paris, where he went in 1820, his English experience was repeated; in fact, he felt that there was too much society for literary advancement.

In 1822 appeared *Bracebridge Hall*, a collection somewhat similar in plan to the *Sketch Book*, but not so meritorious

or making so wide an appeal. The series deals with an old English country place, where the author had previously laid the scenes of his Christmas stories in the *Sketch Book*. The opening and closing sketches are similar to those in the earlier work,[1] and at least two of the stories — *The Stout Gentleman* and *Dolph Heyliger* — are in Irving's best style. Two years later came *Tales of a Traveller*, a collection containing some of Irving's most interesting and effective stories. The best of these are in a group called *The Money-Diggers*, tales "found among the papers of the late Diedrich Knickerbocker," in which he returns to the field and style of *Rip Van Winkle*. The best in this group, and perhaps the best Irving wrote anywhere, is *The Devil and Tom Walker*, a tale of a miserly fellow living near Boston, who made a bargain with "Old Scratch." Tom made a fortune by usury, as directed by his master; but at his mysterious death, it was found that his wealth had been reduced to cinders, chips, and shavings.

Life and Writings in Spain. — In February, 1826, Irving, being drawn to write a life of Columbus, went to Spain to obtain information at first hand, and remained there nearly three years. While in Spain he wrote not only the life of Columbus, but in addition *The Conquest of Granada*, and *The Voyages of the Companions of Columbus*. He also gathered material for *The Alhambra*, a Spanish sketch-book, the record of a stay of some months in the famous old palace of the Moors. *The Alhambra* has all the qualities of the *Sketch Book* and *Tales of a Traveller* that attract young readers. History and legend are skillfully mingled with descriptive sketches and narratives of the author's experiences in this romantic country.

[1] In the *Sketch Book* the titles are: *The Author's Account of Himself* and *L'Envoy*; in *Bracebridge Hall*: *The Author*, and *The Author's Farewell*.



FACSIMILE OF A PAGE OF IRVING'S LIFE OF COLUMBUS.
(Library of Congress.)

In the latter part of 1829 Irving was offered the position of Secretary of Legation in London, which he accepted somewhat against his will. It is true that before leaving America he had political aspirations for a time; but he now had various literary projects, and feared that this new employment would interfere with them. His former triumph, literary and social, was repeated, with the addition of two great distinctions — the award of one of two gold medals of the Royal Society of Literature, and the degree of Doctor of Civil Law from the University of Oxford.

SUNNYSIDE.
Irving's home near Tarrytown, now a suburb of New York City.

Return to America. — May, 1832, brought his long foreign sojourn to a close. His reception in America was worthy of a national hero. A public banquet in New York formed part of this reception, and other cities sought opportunity to celebrate his return in the same fashion — testimonials

which the diffident author felt compelled to decline. He wished, however, to get acquainted with more of his native country, and for that purpose made a lengthy tour of the South and West, the literary fruit of which was three books — *A Tour of the Prairies*, *Astoria* (an account of the attempt to establish a settlement at the mouth of the Columbia River), and *The Adventures of Captain Bonneville*. On his return East, he purchased a small place on the Hudson near Tarrytown, a short distance from New York City, which he named "Sunnyside"; and there he lived for the next ten years. Other works written at this time are *Recollections of Abbotsford and Newstead Abbey* (the homes of Scott and Byron); and *Legends of the Conquest of Spain*, a supplement to *The Conquest of Granada*.

Minister to Spain. — There came in this happy Sunnyside life a break, which Irving regretted much, but which seemed unavoidable — his appointment by President Tyler in 1842 as Minister to Spain. The Senate enthusiastically confirmed the appointment, and it was received with universal approval. Irving accepted it because he saw in it an honor, not merely to himself, but to the profession of letters. His previous residence in Spain, and his diplomatic experience in England, fitted him eminently for the position; and he performed his duties with great credit to himself and to his country.

Life at Sunnyside. — At the end of his term in Madrid (1846) Irving returned to Sunnyside. Here he made a home, not only for himself, but for his two dependent brothers and for a number of nieces; and here he lived most happily for the remainder of his life, which came to a close November 28, 1859, in his seventy-seventh year. The last thirteen years were productive and profitable ones. He wrote *Wolfert's Roost* (*roost* meaning "rest"), a collection of miscellaneous essays; and three biographies — *Gold-*

smith, Mahomet and his Successors, and *Washington.* For them and the copyright on his previous writings he received nearly $100,000. Of the biographies the *Goldsmith* is the most entertaining, and naturally; for the biographer and his subject had many points of resemblance which gave an advantage in interpretation. *The Life of Washington,* which was not completed until his last year, represents a great amount of careful investigation, and has all the characteristic charms of the author's other works; but it is not a great piece of historical research. In other words, it is, as one would expect it to be, popular rather than scholarly.

Characteristics. — The chief element of charm in Irving's writings is the character of the man himself displayed on nearly every page. He was an idealist, like Scott. He had a sympathetic nature, and was devoted to his large circle of friends. "His predominant traits were humor and sentiment"; and these touched people, places, and institutions of the past so as to make them live again. "Of England," says Warner, "whose traditions kindled his susceptible fancy, he wrote as Englishmen would like to write about it." And he showed, as a contemporary poet[1] also tried to show, that America presented possibilities of fanciful treatment to the man who knew where to look for them.

One other fact should be mentioned before leaving Irving — his accomplishment in the field of the short-story.[2] He had not the sense of form possessed by Poe or Hawthorne; but *Rip Van Winkle, The Legend of Sleepy Hollow, The Devil and Tom Walker, The Bold Dragoon,* and many others in his several collections stand as admirable examples of this literary type, especially when compared with the feeble

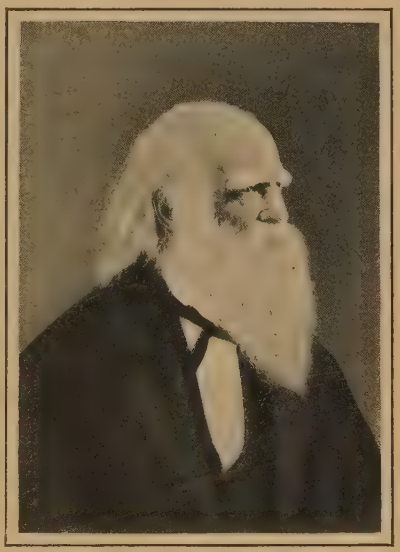
[1] Drake, in *The Culprit Fay;* see page 102.

[2] The coining of this compound is due to Professor Matthews, who wished to differentiate this form sharply from the "novelette." See his *Philosophy of the Short-story.*

efforts which preceded him. Irving may with justice be called the originator of the modern short-story.

WILLIAM CULLEN BRYANT, 1794–1878

Journalist and Poet. — More than half of Bryant's life was passed as editor of a great metropolitan newspaper. But the work for which he has a place in American literature was produced in the quiet of a home as far removed as possible from the confusion and noise of the city. Poetry was his avocation, a part of his home life, and quite separate from his business, which he attended to only in his office. There he kept long hours, and there he exerted an influence that placed his paper in the front rank — a position it still holds. In view of this very real separation of his outward life from his inward, we shall first state the chief facts in his career, and then consider his poetic output.



WILLIAM CULLEN BRYANT.

Early Life in New England. — Bryant was born in Cummington, Massachusetts, November 3, 1794. On his mother's side he was a descendant, as was Longfellow, of John and Priscilla Alden, immortalized in the later poet's *Courtship*

of Miles Standish. His father and grandfather were country doctors. William was a precocious child, being able to read at the age of three; and his early interest in books was wisely encouraged by his father. After private preparation in the homes of neighboring ministers, he entered the sophomore class of Williams College when he was fifteen. Before the year ended Bryant left Williams, and began private study to enter the Junior class at Yale the following year. Financial difficulties of the family prevented the carrying out of this plan, and his academic training ended with the short term at Williams.

After some hesitation, Bryant took up the study of law, as Irving had done, simply because it offered the best chance for a livelihood to a man of studious tastes. He was admitted to the bar in 1816, and practiced nine years. In 1820 his father died, an event which he commemorated in the latter part of the *Hymn to Death.* The following summer he married Miss Frances Fairchild, daughter of a neighboring farmer; and for more than forty years she was "the brightness of his life."

Residence in New York. — The law was exceedingly distasteful to him, and there was no living to be got out of his passion for the fields, the flowers, the birds — a passion which had manifested itself early in him, and which received further impetus by his reading of Wordsworth. An opportunity that promised well offered itself in 1825, the position of associate editor of a magazine in New York City. He accepted, and from that time made his home in the great city. The magazine failed in less than a year, and Bryant again turned to law. In a few months, however, another editorial position came to him — on the staff of the *Evening Post.* In 1829 he became editor-in-chief, continuing in that capacity until his death forty-nine years later. Through the columns of this paper Bryant exerted great influence on

the city, the state, and the nation. It was he who first suggested the creation of Central Park, a proposition received, strange to tell, with bitter opposition by many self-constituted "watch-dogs of the treasury." The *Post* was independent in politics, supporting good men and measures regardless of their party affiliations or origin. In the presidential campaign of 1876, Bryant threw the *Post's* influence

BRYANT'S HOME AT ROSLYN, L.I.
A charming retreat from the noise and cares of the city.

to Hayes because he thought the Republican platform and intentions better than those of the Democrats, although Tilden was a valued personal friend of the editor and much admired by him. Of the influence of Bryant's example, John Bigelow, associate editor of the paper for eleven years, says: "Years after I had retired from the profession, when puzzled about a question of duty or propriety, I would instinctively ask myself, 'How would Bryant act in this

case?' I always and promptly received a most satisfactory answer."

In the years 1834–1836 Bryant made the first of his six tours of Europe. He enjoyed travel, and wrote numerous letters to the paper from abroad and from distant parts of America, which he afterwards collected in two volumes called *Letters of a Traveler* and *Letters from the East*. On these journeys he met many distinguished literary persons, including George Eliot, the Brownings, Wordsworth, and his own fellow countrymen, Longfellow and Hawthorne. These famous names, however, do not appear in the letters, Bryant's sense of propriety telling him "to abstain altogether from that class of topics." The lack of life resulting from this omission cannot be compensated for by any amount of "faultless English and faultless taste."

Public Service and Honors. — Bryant was a vigorous opponent of slavery, and one of the organizers of the Republican party in 1856. In 1860 he exerted himself through the *Post* for the nomination and election of Lincoln, whom he had seen (but of course had not known) nearly thirty years before, leading a company of Illinois volunteers to the Black-Hawk War. In 1864 a great meeting was held in New York in honor of Bryant's seventieth birthday. Poems for the occasion were written by Holmes, Lowell, Bayard Taylor, Julia Ward Howe, and others, and a wonderful address was delivered by Emerson. Numerous and various honors were bestowed upon him in the remaining fourteen years of his life. Says Bigelow: "He was an honorary member of pretty much every Historical, Philological, Antiquarian, and Statistical society; of every Academy of Artists and Men of Letters, and of every college society in the United States of sufficient consideration to feel at liberty to proffer the compliment."

In the summer of 1866 Mrs. Bryant died, after an illness

covering about ten years. The family had been living for some time on the old Bryant homestead in Cummington, which the poet had purchased and on which he had built a new house, in the hope that mountain air would do what the physicians of America and Europe had failed to do. Her loss left him, he said in a letter to a friend, "like one cast out of Paradise and wandering in a strange world." The depth of his devotion and sorrow he expressed, seven years after, in a fragment of a poem in which occurs this stanza:

> "And I, whose thoughts go back to happier days,
> That fled with thee, would gladly now resign
> All that the world can give of fame and praise,
> For one sweet look of thine."

Translation of Homer. — Bryant survived his wife twelve years. He, with his daughter, made his sixth and last trip to Europe the autumn following Mrs. Bryant's death; and here should be mentioned the one poem which is a part of his life rather than a contribution to his fame as a poet. A few years earlier he had published a translation of parts of the *Odyssey*, which was received with great favor. When his wife died, translation proved an endurable employment, and he undertook to render the *Iliad* entire into blank verse, the measure in which he attained his greatest success as a metrical artist.[1] He took the *Iliad* with him on this last journey abroad, determined to translate forty lines a day. After completing it he took up the *Odyssey*, the last book of which he sent to the printer near the close of 1871. It soon became and has continued to be exceedingly popular. His first volume of poems (1821) brought him less than fifteen dollars in five years; his Homer brought more than a thousand a year to his estate for the first fifteen years after publication.

[1] Used in *Thanatopsis*, *A Forest Hymn*, *The Flood of Years*, and many other poems.

In 1872 he visited Mexico, where he received more distinguished attentions than had been accorded to any other foreigner. With the exception of these two trips Bryant remained in New York, active in the conduct of the *Post*, and in the public life of the city, enjoying thoroughly his evenings and holidays at Roslyn, his Long Island estate. His excellent health continued to the end; and when in the city, he still walked the three miles to his office in the morning and the three miles back at noon. None of his family remembered his having any illness save the one of which he died; and that was caused by an accident. On May 29, 1878, after delivering an oration in Central Park in memory of the Italian patriot Mazzini, Bryant had a fall which caused concussion of the brain. He lingered, most of the time unconcious, for fourteen days, passing away five months before his eighty-fourth birthday.

BRYANT IN HIS GROUNDS AT ROSLYN.

"An old-fashioned mansion, surrounded by shrubberies and grand trees, and communicating by a shelving lawn with one of the prettiest of small fresh-water lakes." (Godwin.)

National Estimate of Bryant. — The memorial addresses, which for months following were spoken in all sorts of assemblies and in all parts of the country, could add little to the evidences of esteem shown him in life. All these tributes were paid, not so much to the poet, the journalist,

the publicist, as to "the spotless and faithful citizen, the simple and upright man"; to one who was, according to Bigelow, "the most symmetrical man" America had ever known. Another eulogist, George William Curtis, said that "no man [had] more truly and amply illustrated the scope and the fidelity of republican citizenship."

We have said that poetry was Bryant's avocation. It would be more accurate, perhaps, to say merely that it was not his profession. In this his position was by no means unique in American poetry. Longfellow and Lowell followed the vocation of teaching; Holmes, that of medicine; Poe made his meager living by journalistic hack-work of various sorts.

Unity of his Poetry. — Bryant was surely "called" to poetry if ever man was; and with the exception of his first poem, *The Embargo*, a political satire written when he was eleven years old, the whole body of his verse shows a striking unity. From *Thanatopsis* (written at eighteen) to *The Flood of Years* (written at eighty-two) the "tone of calm, elevated, and hopeful contemplation" (Poe) — usually contemplation of nature in her calmer moods — is consistently maintained. We find a few excursions into the realm of narrative, including the tender *Sella* and the fanciful *Little People of the Snow;* and a small number of patriotic poems, of which the most noteworthy are *Our Country's Call* and *The Death of Lincoln.* But these are exceptional. The themes of the vast majority of Bryant's poems are drawn from nature, of whom he could truly say that he held

"Communion with her visible forms" —

with the woods and meadows and streams and birds and flowers. And it is seldom the mere view that appeals to him. In the outward forms of nature Bryant, like the

English poet with whom he is often (unwisely) compared, heard constantly

> "The still, sad music of humanity,
> Nor harsh nor grating."[1]

Thanatopsis is America's first great poem. Originally it consisted of only forty-nine lines, beginning with what is now line 17 ("Yet a few days") and ending with line 66 ("And make their bed with thee"). In this form it lacked the harmonious setting of the first sixteen lines, and the moral exhortation at the end; hence it fell far short of the full conception in the poet's mind. Yet even in this fragment the editors of the *North American Review* saw poetic merit of so high an order that they were unwilling to believe it was written "on this side of the Atlantic"; and when they published it, they attributed it to *Doctor* Bryant, the poet's father! It appears to have been written in the author's eighteenth or nineteenth year — a phenomenal performance, both in subject and in treatment. It is idle to inquire whether this "view of death" (the literal meaning of the word *thanatopsis*) was inspired by Bryant's reading of the Englishman Henry Kirke White, or the Scotchman Robert Blair, or Bishop Porteus, or William Cowper. Perhaps the choice of subject and attitude toward it can be more easily explained by his generations of Puritan ancestry — which means men of the type of Edwards, who was almost a monk at ten years, and of the type of Mather, who was at an early age profoundly interested in things beyond the grave. It must be kept in mind that Bryant is one of the "Knickerbocker Writers" by accident only. He wrote in the vicinity of New York City, but his spiritual as well as his physical ancestry is pure New England.

[1] The English poet is, of course, Wordsworth. The passage quoted is from *Lines Written above Tintern Abbey*, 91–92.

A Great Poet of Nature. — It is agreed by critics that Bryant never surpassed *Thanatopsis*. He did, however, touch many other chords in nature with almost equal skill. Sometimes it is the might of nature, as in *A Forest Hymn:*

> "Grandeur, strength, and grace
> Are here to speak of Thee;"

as in *The Hurricane:*

> "And hark to the crashing, long and loud,
> Of the chariot of God in the thunder-cloud."

Oftener it is the calmer moods, the milder expressions, of nature that we hear; as in *To a Waterfowl*, whose "certain flight" the Creator "guides through the boundless sky"; as in *Green River:*

> "For in thy lonely and lovely stream
> An image of that calm life appears
> That won my heart in my greener years."

Occasionally there is a note of joy, such as the whole poem *The Gladness of Nature*, beginning

> "Is this a time to be cloudy and sad,
> When our mother Nature laughs around;
> When even the deep blue heavens look glad,
> And gladness breathes from the blossoming ground?"

Another poem that should be mentioned here is the light-hearted, lilting *Robert of Lincoln*, with its refrain of

> "Bob-o'-link, bob-o'-link,
> Spink, spank, spink."

This song illustrates well also the separation of Bryant's two vocations; for it was written in the same year in which the *Post* and its editor were devoting their best energies to the forming of the antislavery party.

The tone of quietness, of repose, in the greater part of Bryant's verse has led some readers to call him cold.

Lowell expressed this opinion humorously in his famous "medley," *A Fable for Critics:*

> "There is Bryant, as quiet, as cool, and as dignified,
> As a smooth, silent iceberg, that never is ignified.
>
> * * * * *
>
> If he stir you at all, it is just, on my soul,
> Like being stirred up with the very North Pole."

This adverse criticism, say the Bryant enthusiasts, is due to a wrong viewpoint: "stateliness," not coldness, is the

BRYANT'S HOMESTEAD AT CUMMINGTON.
Where the poet was born and where he lived again in the latter part of his life.

proper term. The truth is that the man Bryant had a great amount (an excessive amount, thought many) of reserve; he himself considered it remarkable that, being so poor a hand at making friends, he had so many; and this reserve naturally communicated itself to his writing. We have already noted how it takes the life out of his *Letters of a Traveler.*

One characteristic of these nature poems would seem to show the inappropriateness of calling them "cold." They are almost never mere nature lyrics; the trees, the flowers, the winds, are preachers giving the poet messages to mankind that could come through none but a warm heart. He is a lover of his fellow men, and translates for their help and guidance the myriad lessons of the natural world. From the forest we may

> "to the beautiful order of thy works
> Learn to conform the order of our lives."

From the contemplation of the waterfowl's flight we may take comfort that the power guiding it will guide our footsteps also. Our neglect of the yellow violet "midst the gorgeous blooms of May" teaches us the wrong of forgetting humble friends when we reach a higher place in the world. The fringed gentian, which even after the frost still lifts its "sweet and quiet eye" to the heavens, inspires us by its example to be hopeful in the face of death.

A Poet's "Mission." — Bryant's conception of his mission in verse, set forth in *The Poet*, is a high one. He looks back over half a century of poetic effort, and from his experience thus advises him who would "wear the name of poet":

> "Deem not the framing of a deathless lay
> The pastime of a drowsy summer day.
>
> * * * * *
>
> Let thine own eyes o'erflow;
> Let thy lips quiver with the passionate thrill;
> Seize the great thought, ere yet its power be past,
> And bind, in words, the fleet emotion fast."

A Frail Classic but a Real One. — Bryant wrote no long original poem — "he did not believe in long poems," says Bigelow. He seems to have shared Poe's theory that "the

phrase, 'a long poem,' is simply a flat contradiction in terms"; and it is probable that he, like Poe, was incapable of any sustained effort in verse. His entire output, moreover, — under 15,000 lines, — is less in quantity than that of Byron or Shelley or Keats, all of whom died before the age of forty. His range is narrow, his circle of appeal is limited — one wonders whether it would not be even more limited but for the sentimental interest attaching to things learned in childhood. Yet when all is said, it must be realized that Bryant's place is secure — that though he is one of "the scantiest and frailest of classics in our poetry,"[1] he *is* a classic. As the ethical teacher expounding nature in America, in full sympathy with her "visible forms" and interpreting her "various language" in the language of the wayfarer, he occupies a noble place, one which has been approached by no other, and which bids fair to continue Bryant's alone.

JAMES FENIMORE COOPER, 1789–1851

An Accidental Author. — Cooper became an author by accident. He, a farmer, criticized an English novel, was dared to write a better, and attempted to do so. He was the last to appear of "that early triumvirate of American literature not less renowned than the great triumvirate of American politics."[2] Moreover, he did not feel his way into literature as did Irving, nor did his first works show any such calling to the profession as we have noted in Bryant. When a man begins his career on a wager that he can surpass another man, we do not expect high accomplishment. Yet such was Cooper's beginning; and although he made many failures, he made notable successes in two

[1] Matthew Arnold's phrase — used of Gray, author of the *Elegy*.
[2] George William Curtis.

entirely new fields — native American romance, and romance of the sea.

He was born in Burlington, New Jersey, September 15, 1789, the eleventh child of William and Elizabeth (Fenimore) Cooper, both Quakers. The first Cooper had come to America from Stratford-on-Avon about a hundred years earlier, and appears to have been a man of integrity and ability. When James was a year old, his parents moved to Cooperstown, New York, on Otsego Lake, and here the father built Otsego Hall, a fine old mansion afterwards adopted by the son as his permanent home.

COOPER'S BIRTHPLACE.

In the next house Captain Lawrence, father of the naval hero, lived.

Life at Sea, and Marriage. — Cooper's preparation for college was obtained — as was Bryant's — in the home of a clergyman. At the age of thirteen he entered Yale, from which he was dismissed in his junior year for continued neglect of college duties. The year following he was at sea on a merchant vessel, and learned the ways and language of the trade, which he later used successfully in several stories, notably *The Pilot* and *The Red Rover*, and in *Ned Myers*, the biography of a shipmate. He then entered the navy as a midshipman, serving for two years and a half, during which time he assisted in building a brig on Lake Ontario.

In May, 1810, he obtained a year's furlough, and in the following January married Miss de Lancey, a young woman of distinguished Huguenot ancestry and fine personality. At the expiration of his furlough, he yielded to her entreaties and resigned from the navy, taking up farming, first in Westchester County at Mrs. Cooper's home, then at Cooperstown for three years, and again in Westchester.

First Stories. — In 1820 came his accidental entrance into literature. After reading a commonplace novel of English life and asserting that he could write a better himself, he accepted Mrs. Cooper's challenge to attempt it, and the result was *Precaution*, a tiresome, uninteresting story. The author had no first-hand knowledge of his subject; and in a story of this kind he naturally had to introduce a number of women characters, or "females," as he habitually called them, in portraying whom he was wholly successful only in the case of Judith Hutter, the heroine of *The Deerslayer*. *Precaution* is a failure, but it was followed by an unqualified success, *The Spy*, a story of *American* life, written at the suggestion of friends. He had little confidence in the subject; but this romance of the Revolution passed through three editions in two months, and a dramatization of it was drawing large audiences a month later.

Two years after *The Spy* came the first of that great series which constitutes Cooper's chief claim as an author — the Leather-Stocking Tales. This was *The Pioneers* (1823), which Cooper wrote as a labor of love, laying the scenes on his beloved Otsego, and introducing characters belonging to the frontier community, among them the Quaker Judge Temple, thought to be a portrait of his father. In this story appears for the first time Nathaniel (Natty) Bumppo, the woodsman, nicknamed Leather-Stocking here, the unique figure whom we meet in other tales of the series, as Deerslayer, Hawkeye, Pathfinder, La Longue Carabine, and

finally just "the trapper." The favor with which this second romance of America was received may be judged from the fact that 3500 copies were sold before noon on the day of publication.

Because of its origin one other story must be mentioned here — *The Pilot*, first of Cooper's sea tales. When Scott's *The Pirate* appeared in 1822, the author of the Waverley novels was still unidentified by the public. Hearing Scott's authorship of the work called in question because of the thorough and profound knowledge of the sea displayed, Cooper maintained that, on the contrary, it was clearly not written by a seaman — that it was accurate in details, but did not have the real flavor of salt water. To prove this to himself, he wrote *The Pilot*, the hero of which, though unnamed, is John Paul Jones ("liberty's brave Buccaneer," as the old song calls him), and the story of which was suggested by Jones's cruise in the *Ranger*.[1] The success of this story was almost as great as that of *The Spy*, and it still holds a high place in romantic fiction.

Cooper was now firmly established as a literary man, in a sphere which he may almost be said to have discovered, and which he certainly made peculiarly his own. In 1822, after the death of his father and mother, he moved to New York City, and became associated with the "Knickerbocker Writers." Two years later Columbia University conferred upon him the Master's degree, one of the few honors that fell to him. He was later honored with membership in the American Philosophical Society (1823), the Georgia Historical Society (1839), and the Maryland Historical Society (1844).

In 1823 the author asked the state legislature for legal

[1] The action of *The Pilot* takes place in 1778. Jones did not take command of the *Bonhomme Richard* until the following year. See *Dictionary of National Biography*.

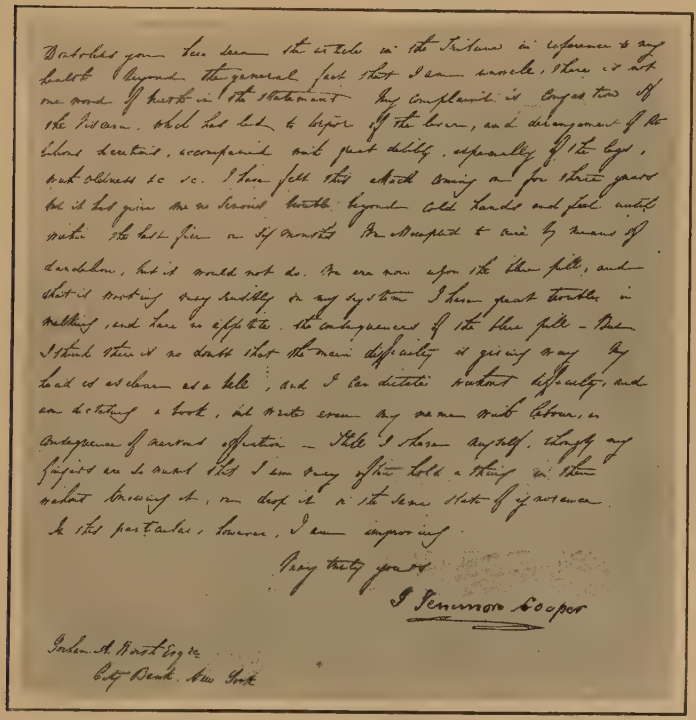
authority to adopt the name Fenimore, in accordance with a request of his mother. He wished to be James Cooper Fenimore;[1] but, apparently through a misunderstanding, the act made him James Fenimore-Cooper, and he used the hyphenated form for a short time.

In Europe. — During the seven years following, Cooper was in Europe, holding for the first three years the position of consul at Lyons, France. He traveled widely, spent a winter in Rome, four months in London, and nearly four and a half years in and near Paris; three years of this last period were immediately after the Revolution of 1830. He became intimate with Lafayette, and met frequently other French notables and one great Englishman — Sir Walter Scott. It may be remarked here that nowhere has Cooper been more warmly admired than in France, and that by the foremost literary critics, as well as by the general public. George Sand and Balzac both wrote enthusiastically of his works.

At War with his Countrymen. — Shortly after his return to America he renovated Otsego Hall, the mansion built by his father at Cooperstown forty years before, and took up his residence there permanently. This year (1834) also marks the beginning of his warfare with his countrymen, which continued almost till his death in 1851. The story of this warfare, a long series of controversial writings and libel suits, is an unfortunate chapter in his life, and will be passed over briefly. The beginning of it was *A Letter to his Countrymen*, partly a reply to published criticisms of his works, and partly a wholly unnecessary discussion of a political question at that time agitating the country. The *Letter* he followed with a satirical novel, *The Monikins*, and several volumes of travels, in which he repeated and elaborated his criticisms of America. The second quarrel was with his

[1] Clymer, page 5. Lounsbury does not so state this.

fellow townsmen, who resented and disputed his assertion of authority over Three Mile Point, a spot on the Cooper estate which had for years been used as a public picnic ground. He proved his right, but at the cost of much of his popular-



Facsimile of a Letter of Cooper.

ity. His third false step was a series of suits for libel against a number of newspapers which had attacked him vigorously — and often viciously — for his conduct in the Three Mile Point affair. Cooper won most of the suits, and

in the end forced a retraction of the offensive statements, but at further cost to his popularity. His last battle was with the New York *Commercial Advertiser*, which in a review of his *History of the United States Navy* reflected on his character. Cooper again sued for libel, and was again victorious. At least one other suit was still pending, and had not been settled when Cooper died.

The seven years' fighting embittered him towards the public and the public towards him; and though later he became "less unpopular," as Professor Lounsbury puts it, he left a death-bed injunction that his family permit no authorized biography of him to be written. He had consideration enough for his children to wish that they might be spared a recital of his troubles. The strength of his feeling in this direction is shown by his regret that he had ever written the *Naval History*. Said he: "Were the manuscript now lying before me unpublished, I certainly should throw it into the fire as an act of prudence to myself and of justice to my children."

The five years following the controversies saw the publication of Cooper's two best stories — *The Pathfinder* and *The Deerslayer*, which completed the Leather-Stocking Tales. Between 1840 and 1850 he wrote fourteen others, none of which are especially notable; but all sold well, and even bitter enemies read and admired most of his romances. According to Professor Lounsbury, Thurlow Weed, editor of the Albany *Journal*, who had been the defendant in several of Cooper's suits, "was a profound and even bigoted admirer of his adversary's novels!"

Cooper spent his last years on his estate, amusing himself and spending his money in farming experiments. This sort of life tended to soften him, and apparently to fix and deepen religious convictions which had been growing in him; and in July, 1851, he was confirmed in the Episcopal

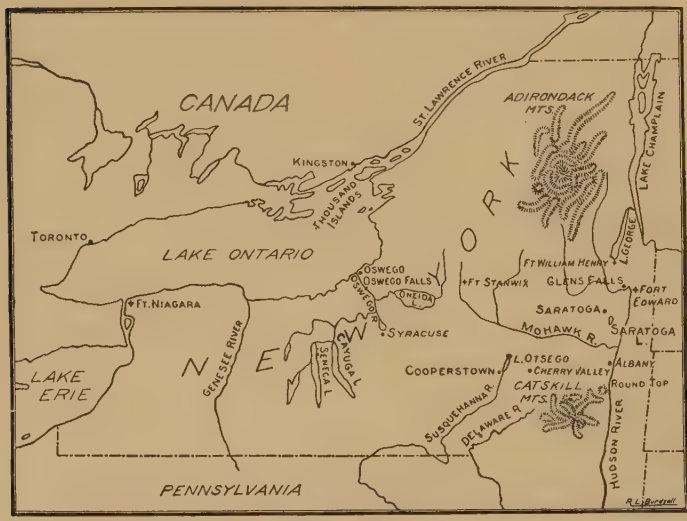
Church. But he was not to enjoy long the peace and contentment he had at last gained. Already signs of physical weakening had appeared, and as the summer advanced, he grew rapidly worse. On September 14, one day before his sixty-second birthday, he died. On the twenty-fifth of the month friends and admirers made arrangements for a meeting in his memory, which was held the following February, William Cullen Bryant delivering the principal address. It cannot be said that his death caused very general sorrow; but the feeling was universal that a great man had passed away, as was shown by the large attendance at the memorial meeting.

No extended analysis of Cooper's merits and faults as a writer will be made here. Mere mention of some of the characteristics that have given his stories continued favor will suffice.

The Sea Tales. — Scott found in *The Red Rover* "something too much of nautical language," and the average reader will perhaps feel the same objection to other sea tales, — *The Two Admirals* and *The Pilot*, for example. The famous fifth chapter of the last-named is rather obscure to a landsman, with its "double-reefed topsails," its "weather main-chains," its "after-yards trimmed," its "Let her luff!" "Square away the yards! — in mainsail!" But we can pass over all this for the sake of the story and some finely drawn characters, — the Pilot himself, and Long Tom Coffin, the brave seaman who is of the same stuff as Natty Bumppo. There is probably in all the literature of adventure no more realistic and thrilling incident than the fight of the *Ariel* and the *Alacrity* in chapter eighteen of *The Pilot*, or the wreck of the *Ariel* with Long Tom on board, in chapter twenty-four.

The Indian Tales. — The same virtues appear in the Indian tales, which Cooper wrote, says Clymer, "solely because

stories of adventure were tingling in his blood." The Leather-Stocking Tales, in the order of the events narrated, form a sort of prose epic depicting an altogether new kind of heroic career from young manhood to extreme old age. In *The Deerslayer* Natty Bumppo, whose first nickname (the title



MAP SHOWING SCENES OF THE LEATHER-STOCKING TALES.

Deerslayer takes place on and around Lake Otsego (called "Glimmerglass" in the story); *Last of the Mohicans*, in the country between the Mohawk River and Lake George; *Pathfinder*, on the Oswego River, and the south shore of Lake Ontario from Fort Niagara to Thousand Islands; *Pioneers*, around Lake Otsego, chiefly the vicinity of Cooperstown (called "Templeton" in the story). Drawn by R. L. Burdsall.

of the story) has come from the wonderful execution of his famous musket Killdeer, sheds human blood for the first time — a thing which he was averse to, and which he resorted to only in self-defense. Through *The Last of the Mohicans*, *The Pathfinder*, and *The Pioneers*, we follow

the scout's adventures, and observe his growing hatred of the Mingoes, whom he comes to consider no better than vermin and deserving of no better fate than vermin. In *The Prairie* the scout's eyesight has become dim at the age of fourscore and seven, and he is a pathetic figure, gaining his subsistence by what seems to him the ignoble method of trapping. In *The Pathfinder* we find him yielding to the charms of a "female," who consents to marry him, but whom he willingly surrenders to young Jasper Western, the nominal hero of the story and the winner of her affection. Pathfinder's love for Mabel Dunham is noble and sincere, and for all women he has a chivalrous feeling that is an exquisite touch.

Portrayal of Indian Character. — A word must be said regarding Cooper's portrayal of Indian life and characters. The former, it is generally agreed, leaves nothing to be desired. Otsego Lake in his boyhood was the frontier, and he saw much of the Indians and was much interested in their mode of life and conduct. Their customs, practices, and racial characteristics he got at first hand, and these he has pictured in his romances better than any real history. There is not such general agreement as to Cooper's individual Indians, particularly the good ones. Chingachgook, Uncas, and Hard-heart are objected to as idealized figures; for though they have the daring, the cunning, the disregard of life, that we commonly associate with their race, they have also a fidelity to the cause they espouse and to the individuals they believe in, which some critics seem to think impossible in a red man. The Indian of these romances, however, is unquestionably the real Indian to English readers, and he is, as some one has said, a gain to literature whether he is to truth or not.

Cooper is distinctly, as the preceding sentence suggests, a novelist of the people, rather than of the critics. Much

fault may be found with his style, with his minor characters, with his humor, with his long and wordy introductions, with the structure (or lack of structure) of his plots. Even these shortcomings, however, may be forgiven in a man who could create a Hawkeye and a Chingachgook, and who could give such life to the romantic early days of our country. It is worth while for us to be reminded that the struggle of 1740–1800 was not merely one of cities and legislative halls as recorded in the preceding chapter, but was also carried on in the frontier forests, for homes for the millions coming to work out the great experiment in a new form of government. And for the great mass of the people this story has certainly been more entertainingly and hence more convincingly told by the romancer than by the matter-of-fact historian.

DRAKE AND HALLECK

"The Croakers." — In 1819 there appeared in the New York *Evening Post* a series of poems, mostly satires upon current events, signed "Croaker," or "Croaker, Jr." They were the joint production of two close friends, Joseph Rodman Drake and Fitz-Greene Halleck, minor members of the Knickerbocker group, who had considerable fame in their day, and are still remembered for a few poems.

Joseph Rodman Drake (1795–1820). — Drake, though five years younger than his friend, began writing several years earlier. At the age of twenty-one he wrote a long poem, *The Culprit Fay*, which for some reason was not published until fifteen years after his death. With something of the Romantic spirit he aimed in this poem to show that American streams had poetical possibilities as great as any in England or Scotland. Of Drake's *Croaker* pieces the best known is *The American Flag*, which is worthy of notice as

a patriotic outburst, though the first stanza is burdened with a too elaborate figure. Drake, a New Yorker by birth, was left an orphan when quite young; and his childhood was a hard struggle with poverty. He studied medicine, graduating in 1816, and in the same year married Miss Sarah Eckford, daughter of a wealthy New York shipbuilder. This ended his financial troubles; but he was a consumptive, and in 1818 went south in search of health. He spent about a year in Louisiana, and returning to New York early in 1820, died there in September.

Fitz-Greene Halleck (1790–1867) was born in Connecticut, but at an early age adopted New York as his home. After some years in a bank he became confidential clerk to John Jacob Astor; and at the latter's death in 1848 received a pension which enabled him to retire to his birthplace for the remainder of his life. Halleck wrote little, and his standing as a poet rests mainly on two poems. The first, *On the Death of Joseph Rodman Drake*, beginning

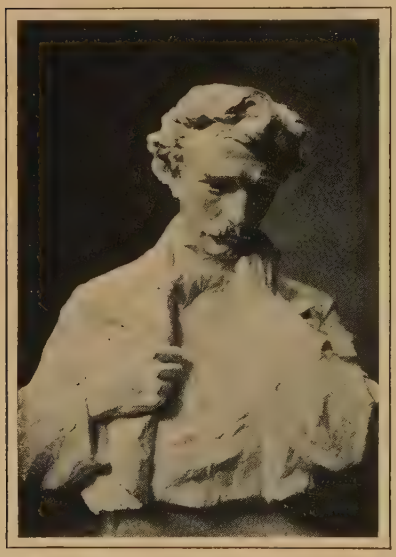
> "Green be the turf above thee
> Friend of my better days,"

is universally admired, both by critics and by general readers. It contains only twenty-four lines, but in its directness, sincerity, and simplicity says all that the most devoted of friends could say. His other famous poem is *Marco Bozzaris*, celebrating in stirring lines the self-sacrifice of the Greek patriot in the struggle with Turkey, and containing familiar passages, of which the closing apostrophe to the spirit of Bozzaris is most worth quoting:

> "For thou art Freedom's now, and Fame's:
> One of the few, the immortal names,
> That were not born to die."

EDGAR ALLAN POE, 1809–1849

The two men who, by common consent both at home and abroad, are ranked highest among American writers are Edgar Allan Poe and Nathaniel Hawthorne. They are notably individual; they are men of letters and nothing more; they are universally recognized as *literary artists*. While Poe wrote much criticism and a few poems of the first order, it seems likely that his fame will finally rest on his short-stories, a likelihood that may be stated also of Hawthorne. In this difficult field they are unsurpassed, not only in American, but in the world's, literature.



BUST OF POE AT UNIVERSITY OF VIRGINIA, BY ZOLNAY.
Believed to be the best interpretation of the poet.

A Man of Contradictions. — In 1841 Poe wrote to a friend who was preparing a sketch of his life: "Born, Jan., 1811." In 1849, after the sketch was published, Poe wrote: "You have given my sister's age instead of mine, I was born in Dec., 1813." The truth is that he was born January 19, 1809, and that his sister was two years younger than he. He enlisted in the army at the age of eighteen years, four

months; minors were then admitted into the service, yet he gave his age as twenty-two. Two years later, when he applied for admission to West Point, he said he was nineteen years and three months old. The title-page of his first volume of poems informs us that the contents are "By a Bostonian." In a letter to a friend fifteen years later he said: "I am a Virginian. . . . I have resided all my life until the last few years, in Richmond." In fact, he had lived a few months in Boston, five years in England, one year at the University of Virginia, four years in New York City, one year in Baltimore, and two years in army posts. In view of these facts we can hardly accept Poe's statement that he had "an inveterate habit of speaking the truth." We are more likely to agree with Professor Woodberry: "Any unsupported assertion by Poe regarding himself is to be received with great caution."

Explanations. — How can such a state of things be explained? Was Poe intentionally lying? One searches in vain for motives. Did he make these contradictory statements under the influence of liquor? The idea that Poe was an habitual drunkard was long ago exploded. Or were they merely another expression of Poe's tendency to mystify? A possible explanation may be found in a letter to the poet Lowell: "I have been too deeply conscious of the mutability and evanescence of temporal things to give any consistent effort to anything — to be consistent in anything. My life has been whim — impulse — passion — a longing for solitude — a scorn of all things present, in an earnest desire for the future." Another possible explanation is a caution to Poe from his friend John P. Kennedy: "Your fault is your love of the extravagant. Pray beware of it." This fault we should express now by the popular phrase, "playing to the galleries." His whole life was spectacular.

Early Life — in Virginia. — Poe was a "Bostonian" by birth, of actor parents who were then playing in the Massachusetts capital. Both parents died before he was three years old, Mrs. Poe while filling an engagement in Richmond, Virginia; and Edgar was adopted by a Richmond merchant, John Allan, between whose wife and the adopted son a strong affection grew up. When Poe was six years old, Mr. Allan's business took him to England; and the boy spent the next five years at Dr. Bransby's school in a London suburb, a school of which he has left an account in *William Wilson*. When they returned to Richmond in 1820, Poe's education was continued in private schools until he entered the recently established University of Virginia in February, 1826.

Since women filled so large a place in Poe's life, it may be well to mention here two who, in addition to Mrs. Allan, touched his heart while he was still a boy. The first was Mrs. Stanard, mother of a school friend, who welcomed him cordially on his first visit to her home, and exerted a strong influence over him. It is said that after her death he haunted her grave in his apparently incurable sorrow. The other woman was Miss Royster, a neighbor of the Allans, near Poe's age, who evidently returned his affection; but the promising romance was ended by Mr. Royster's intercepting Poe's letters, which he did, says the lady, solely "because we were too young." That her attraction for him was not superficial is indicated by his renewing his attentions to her in the last year of his life, when again he met her, then a widow, in Richmond.

In the Army. — During his ten months at the University Poe distinguished himself in languages, and read extensively in four or five. Unfortunately he also distinguished himself at gaming, and returned to Mr. Allan with a fine crop of "debts of honor," which that gentleman declined to pay. A disagreement followed, which resulted in Poe's leaving

Richmond and enlisting in the army under the name of Edgar A. Perry. The next month appeared *Tamerlane and Other Poems, By a Bostonian*, a collection of ten poems most of which were written, says Poe, before he was fifteen. There are allusions to Mrs. Stanard and Miss Royster, and to his passionate and unhappy life. There are no great poems here; but there are clear foretastes of the hauntingly

WEST RANGE, UNIVERSITY OF VIRGINIA.
The dormitory in which Poe lived.

musical quality of Poe's best work, which one feels in his prose as well as in his verse. During his term in the army Poe made an excellent record, rising to the position of sergeant major.

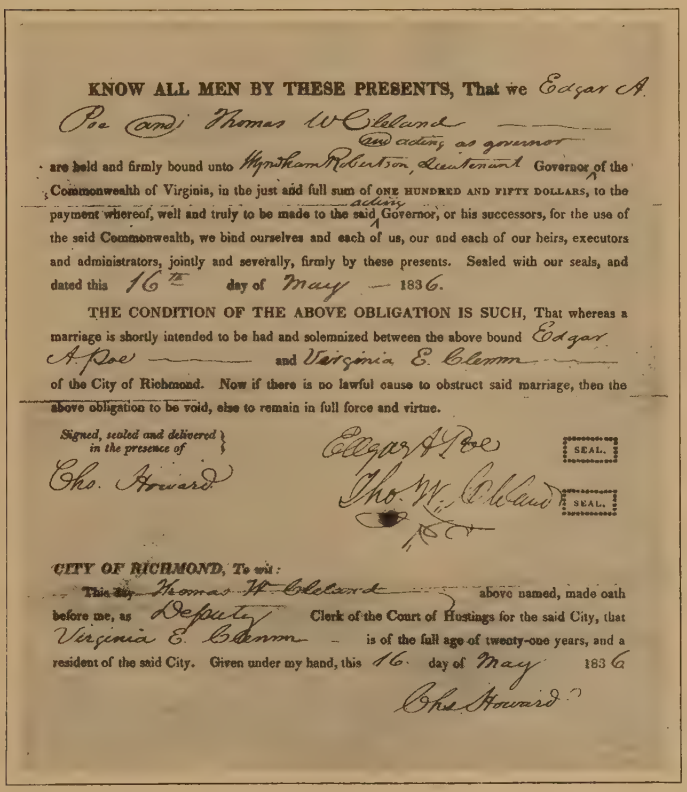
In April, 1829, after two years' service, he secured his discharge from the army, and became reconciled to Mr. Allan, Mrs. Allan having recently died. In July of the following year, Poe, partly through Mr. Allan's efforts, re-

ceived appointment to the military academy at West Point; but discipline here proved less congenial than that in the army, Poe neglected duties and broke rules, and was court-martialed and dismissed in less than a year.

First Literary Success. — No trace of Poe's whereabouts has been found from this time, March, 1831, to the summer of 1833, when he made his first "strike" as a writer. This was the winning of a hundred dollar prize given by the *Baltimore Visiter* for the best story to be published in its columns. Poe submitted six stories, grouped as *Tales of the Folio Club*, and the judges unanimously awarded the prize to *A MS. Found in a Bottle*, a thrilling story of shipwreck. A prize of fifty dollars for the best poem might also have gone to Poe, it appears, had not the judges thought it unwise to give both to one contestant. The *Visiter* for October 12, 1833, which contained the *MS.*, contained also a note advising Poe to publish the whole series of the *Folio Club*, and concluding: "These tales are eminently distinguished by a wild, vigorous, and poetical imagination, a rich style, a fertile invention, and varied and curious learning." Among the number were two other notable tales — *The Assignation*, a picturesque and tragic tale of Venice, and *A Descent into the Maelstrom*, an exciting sea adventure like the *MS.*, but without its fatal ending.

Disinherited. — Poe's foster father married again, and Poe never got into the good graces of the second Mrs. Allan. When Mr. Allan died in March, 1834, a few months after Poe had attained real literary fame, he failed to mention his adopted son in his will. The cause of the estrangement will doubtless never be known, and it is unprofitable to discuss various suggested explanations. It is enough to say that Poe was surprised and bitterly disappointed at being thus cut off, and that from this time he lived by his pen.

Shortly after this a license was issued in Baltimore for the marriage of Poe, age twenty-five, and his cousin Virginia Clemm, age twelve years and one month; but there



KNOW ALL MEN BY THESE PRESENTS, That we Edgar A. Poe (and) Thomas W. Cleland (and acting as governor) are held and firmly bound unto Wyndham Robertson, Lieutenant Governor (acting) of the Commonwealth of Virginia, in the just and full sum of ONE HUNDRED AND FIFTY DOLLARS, to the payment whereof, well and truly to be made to the said Governor, or his successors, for the use of the said Commonwealth, we bind ourselves and each of us, our and each of our heirs, executors and administrators, jointly and severally, firmly by these presents. Sealed with our seals, and dated this 16th day of May — 1836.

THE CONDITION OF THE ABOVE OBLIGATION IS SUCH, That whereas a marriage is shortly intended to be had and solemnized between the above bound Edgar A. Poe — and Virginia E. Clemm — of the City of Richmond. Now if there is no lawful cause to obstruct said marriage, then the above obligation to be void, else to remain in full force and virtue.

Signed, sealed and delivered in the presence of
Chs. Howard

Edgar A. Poe SEAL.
Thos. W. Cleland SEAL.

CITY OF RICHMOND, To wit:

This day Thomas W. Cleland above named, made oath before me, as Deputy Clerk of the Court of Hustings for the said City, that Virginia E. Clemm is of the full age of twenty-one years, and a resident of the said City. Given under my hand, this 16 day of May 1836

Chs. Howard

POE'S MARRIAGE BOND.

is no record of the performance of a ceremony at this time. A second license was obtained about a year later, and they were married in Richmond. She was, according to all testi-

mony, a beautiful and intelligent girl, and Poe was constant in his devotion to her till her death in 1847; but it does not appear that she had any great influence upon his life, or any influence whatever upón his work, unless she was the inspiration of *Annabel Lee.*

In Richmond. — The year following his marriage Poe began his journalistic career as editor of the *Southern Literary Messenger,* at a salary of $520 a year,[1] his first occupation assuring a regular income. This was increased to $800 by extra work, and he was promised $1000 the second year. The editor of those days himself wrote most of his magazine; and Poe published in the *Messenger,* not only an enormous amount of critical work, but some of his best tales (for example, *Berenice* and *Morella*), and a few of his best poems (such as *Israfel,* and the first *To Helen*). How well his work was done may be gathered from the fact that the circulation of the magazine increased from seven hundred to five thousand during the year he was connected with it. His surrender of this position after such success is one of many acts of Poe's life not readily explained. His eccentricities disturbed Mr. White, the matter-of-fact owner of the *Messenger;* his sensitive nature was easily hurt by his employer; and his severe criticisms of many American writers had brought suggestions to White that it would be well to part with his editor at the first opportunity. Any one of these reasons may account for his move.

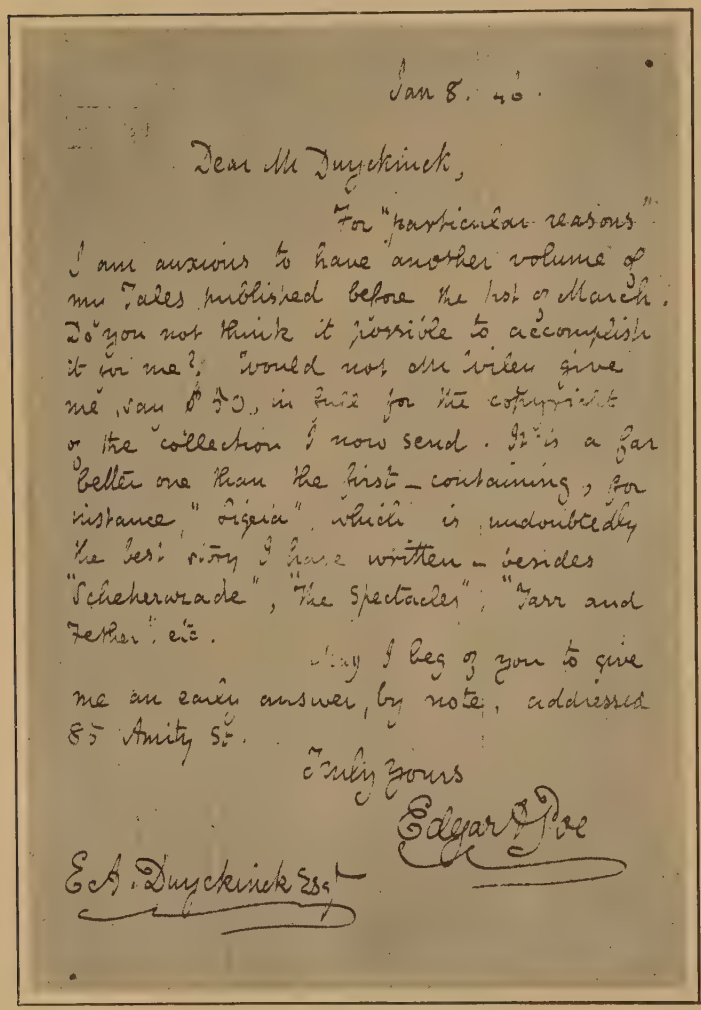
In New York. — Leaving Richmond in January, 1837, Poe went to New York, where he seems to have had no regular occupation, possibly because of the financial panic. He completed and published in book form the *Narrative of Arthur Gordon Pym,* a realistic account of Antarctic exploration which he had begun in the *Messenger.* Beyond this

[1] The reader should remember that every dollar in 1835 had the purchasing power of from three to five dollars to-day.

book and a single critical article in the *New York Review* Poe seems to have published nothing while in New York.

In Philadelphia. — From 1838 to 1844 his home was in Philadelphia, where he wrote for various magazines, and where in January, 1841, he issued a prospectus for one of his own, to be called the *Penn Magazine*. Ever since his connection with the *Southern Literary Messenger* Poe had longed to have under his control a periodical which should be independent and fearless, supporting "the general interests of the republic of letters, without reference to particular regions." It was to be independent of booksellers and cliques, and to leave nothing to be desired on the mechanical side. The scheme fell through, however, and he became editor of *Graham's Magazine*, where he repeated his success with the *Messenger*, increasing its circulation from 8000 to 40,000 in a little more than a year. In 1840 there had appeared Poe's *Tales of the Grotesque and the Arabesque*, a two-volume collection containing *Ligeia*, which the author considered his best, and *The Fall of the House of Usher*, which is ranked first by the critics. The collection did not sell; and when a year later he offered the same publishers a new edition, with eight new tales added, they declined, saying that the previous venture had not returned them the expense of publication. This fact gives some idea of the literary taste of America in the forties; for Poe's profit from the 1840 *Tales* was twenty copies for distribution among friends!

Analytical Tales. — After leaving *Graham's* and finding no other desirable literary connection, Poe sought a government appointment in Washington, seeing a "disposition in government to cherish letters." He did not profess any enthusiasm for clerical work, but merely desired a living salary independent of literature. He failed in his efforts, and seems to have had no income for nearly a year except



Jan 8. 40.

Dear Mr Duyckinck,

For "particular reasons" I am anxious to have another volume of my Tales published before the 1st of March. Do you not think it possible to accomplish it for me? Would not Mr Wiley give me, say $50, in full for the copyright of the collection I now send. It is a far better one than the first — containing, for instance, "Ligeia", which is undoubtedly the best story I have written — besides "Scheherazade", "The Spectacles", "Tarr and Fether", etc.

May I beg of you to give me an early answer, by note, addressed 85 Amity St.

Truly Yours

Edgar A. Poe

E. A. Duyckinck Esqr

FACSIMILE OF A LETTER OF POE.
In which he designates *Ligeia* as his best story.

a one hundred dollar prize awarded *The Gold Bug* (1843), probably his best-known tale. A year after its publication Poe asserted that over 300,000 copies had been circulated. "From this tale," says A. Conan Doyle, "all stories of ciphers and treasure are to be dated." To the Philadelphia period belongs also the *Murders in the Rue Morgue*, one of the greatest of his detective stories. Of Poe's work in this field Doyle, Poe's most distinguished successor, says: "Problem and solution must form the theme, and character-drawing be limited and subordinate. On this narrow path the writer must walk, and he sees the footmarks of Poe always in front of him. He is happy if he ever finds the means of breaking away and striking out on some little side-track of his own."

In 1843 Poe gave his cordial support to the *Pioneer*, a magazine started in Boston by Lowell, with much the same aims and ideals as the *Penn*. This venture failed after the third number, and Poe soon issued another prospectus for an independent journal to be called the *Stylus*, merely "my old *Penn* revived and remodeled under better auspices." Lowell returned the compliment of Poe's support of the *Pioneer*, and had greater hopes for the *Stylus*; "for," he wrote to Poe, "I think you understand editing vastly better than I . . . and you have more . . . industry than I." But the *Stylus* never saw the light; and in April, 1844, Poe removed again to New York.

Again in New York. — After some months of hack-work Poe joined the staff of the *Evening Mirror*, in which on January 29, 1845, appeared *The Raven*, the first of the author's poems to attain immediate popular success. The notoriety thus gained brought Poe the offer of a more agreeable situation, coeditor of the *Broadway Journal*, of which he subsequently became editor and proprietor. The *Journal* failed in less than a year, solely through the proprietor's

lack of business ability. Judged even by the low standards of the day, Poe never got a fair return for his work, either as his own master or as an employee.

Death of his Wife. — In the early summer of 1846 Poe moved to a cottage in Fordham, then a suburb of New York City, and furnished it (very meagerly) with money gained in a lawsuit. Here with his child-wife and her mother — Poe's "more than mother" — he lived in extreme poverty and wretchedness. Their condition was brought to public notice, and this added to Poe's distress; but some relief came through a Mrs. Shew, who collected a small amount of money for the sufferers, and helped them greatly by her company and advice. A grief which neither money nor sympathy could help was, however, not far distant. Virginia Poe, who had ruptured a blood-vessel some years previously, showed unmistakable signs of decline soon after the move to Fordham, and grew rapidly worse through the fall, passing away in January, 1847. Poe now suffered, as one biographer puts it, "the exquisite agony of utter loneliness." So often had he in imagination gone through the misery of seeing her die that her actual death brought a new sort of misery. He was threatened with brain fever, from which Mrs. Shew, who had received medical training, feared he would not recover without the use of stimulants, and these he could not use.

He did recover, however, and returned to his miscellaneous literary work, writing near the close of the year *Ulalume*, about which there is probably wider difference of opinion than about any other of his compositions. The haunting music is there, as usual, also the atmosphere of mystery; but the meaning is to most readers very obscure. Professor Woodberry understands it as "the language of a spirit sunk in a blank and moaning despair, and at every move beaten back helplessly upon itself."

In the autumn of 1848 Poe met Mrs. Sarah Helen Whitman, whose verses he had admired and who had greatly admired his. They became engaged; but the engagement was broken by her friends, who with some reason, perhaps, considered him unfit to be her husband. Mrs. Whitman afterwards was very bitter towards these "friends," and was one of the first to defend the poet's memory against the slanders of his first biographer and other scandalmongers. "This tragedy of the heart," said one who knew her well, "colored all the rest of her life."

Last Months. — Poe's affections for women were "intense but fleeting." Within a year after the episode with Mrs. Whitman, while on a visit and lecturing tour in Virginia, he met Mrs. Shelton (the Miss Royster of his youth), and became engaged to her. The few months of this trip seem to have been the happiest since he reached manhood; but he was not destined to have them prolonged. In October, 1849, he left Richmond for New York, to wind up some business affairs before his marriage to Mrs. Shelton, and traveled by boat to Baltimore, where he met his death — how will doubtless never be known.

He landed in Baltimore on election day, when elections were shamefully (mis)-conducted; and the most plausible explanation of his death is that advanced by Professor Harrison, that he was caught by a gang and drugged so they might "vote" him all over the city. This is known to have been a common practice at that time with strangers; and in one of the voting places where these gangs operated Poe was found insensible by Dr. Snodgrass, a friend to whom his whereabouts had been communicated, and who took him to a hospital. All efforts to revive him were unsuccessful, and he died October 7, without regaining consciousness sufficiently to give any account of his experiences. He was buried in Baltimore.

An Inexplicable Character. — It may be doubted whether one short life has ever been filled with so many controversies as Poe's, or has ever given rise to so many controversies after its close. Nearly every one of his journalistic changes, nearly every one of his love affairs, and a large number of his criticisms, have raised questions that are still unanswered. He was never a hard drinker; but he did

RESIDENCE OF JOHN ALLAN, POE'S FOSTER-FATHER.
Though not a handsome structure, it was long a notable landmark at the top of one of Richmond's seven hills.

yield at times to an inherited weakness. He was always in poverty — "often abject and always extreme." He was certainly willful and impatient of restraint, and he was conscious of possessing far greater abilities than most of those for whom he worked. Here is sufficient explanation of his difficulty in getting on with people. Moreover, while he was a fearless and usually sincere critic, he had strong prejudices and "hobbies." For an example of the first, he felt himself a Southern writer, and believed that there were

conspiracies among booksellers and other critics to deny any merit to Southern writers. This led him to break a long friendship with Lowell by a quite undeserved attack on the *Fable for Critics*, in which Poe was the only Southern writer mentioned. For an example of the second, the detection of plagiarism was almost a mania with him. He especially pursued Longfellow with this last charge, and carried on so lengthy a controversy with that poet's friends that it is known as "the Longfellow war." It is worth noting that Longfellow himself took no part in it, and wished his friends to refrain. His explanation of Poe's attitude towards him is evidence that he did not take the matter to heart. Said he: "The harshness of his criticisms I have never attributed to anything but the irritation of a sensitive nature, chafed by some indefinite sense of wrong."

Controversies regarding the facts of Poe's life began almost immediately after his death. A certain Reverend Doctor Griswold published an "authorized" life, which was full of misstatements, some apparently intentional. There had been a disagreement between the two men, and Griswold seems to have waited till he might take his revenge without fear of a return blow; but he reckoned without the poet's friends, who immediately rushed to the defense; and for thirty years the warfare continued. The thorough researches of the biographers of Poe, and the careful analysis of such writers as Mr. J. M. Robertson[1] may be said to have settled all points in dispute which can be settled in this world.

Poe's rank as a writer is now not much in dispute. As poet and as short-story writer his place is admittedly at the top, and his critical work no longer calls for apology.

[1] In *New Essays towards a Critical Method*. This admirable example of "collective" criticism seems to the present writer the best short study of Poe that has yet appeared.

Poe the Critic. — Much of his criticism deals with books of only passing interest, as do our magazines and "Saturday book supplements" to-day. He was inclined to overpraise women writers, and as mentioned above, to charge plagiarism on the discovery of the slightest similarities in works. But he was one of the first to recognize and proclaim the genius of Bryant and Hawthorne in America, and of Tennyson and Mrs. Browning in England. His exposition of "The Short-story"[1] in his review of *Twice Told Tales* is a classic definition of a type of literature. On the whole Poe's work as critic was beneficial and creditable.

The Story-teller. — In the field of the short-story he is supreme, though at times he is closely approached by Hawthorne. Both were eminently successful in allegorical and supernatural tales; but Poe's analytical tales have no parallel in the New England writer, and it is this class to which Conan Doyle gives the high praise quoted above. Poe manages his suspense better than Hawthorne, and the meaning of his allegories is not so evident, or enforced with so great insistence; his supernatural tales are wholly supernatural, and not of divided interest and effect. Hawthorne had, as we shall see, merits denied to Poe, and it is quite unnecessary to tag the writers as first and second.

The Poet. — The range of Poe's poetry is as limited as Bryant's, and his total product smaller even than Bryant's, which we have seen was very small. Only a few subjects are treated in verse by Poe, and his five or six greatest poems treat only one — death. Poetry he defines in *The Poetic Principle* as "the rhythmical creation of beauty"; and in *The Philosophy of Composition*, which purports to be an account of how he wrote *The Raven*, he asserts that "the death of a beautiful woman is, unquestionably, the most poetical topic in the world." Hence, we find death the

[1] See above page 80, Note 2.

subject of *The Conqueror Worm, The Haunted Palace, The City in the Sea;* and the death of a beautiful woman, of *The Raven, Ulalume, Lenore,* and *Annabel Lee.* Some one has called Poe the world's greatest artist of death.

Perhaps the criticism that Poe himself would have appreciated most is that of the poet Tennyson in 1885, with which we shall close this sketch. "There is one spot in America," said Tennyson, "which I would like to visit, viz., the long-neglected spot in Baltimore[1] where the greatest American genius lies buried. In my opinion your Bryant, Whittier, etc., are pygmies compared with Poe. He is the literary glory of America. More than thirty-five years have elapsed since his death, and his fame is constantly increasing. That is a true test of genius."

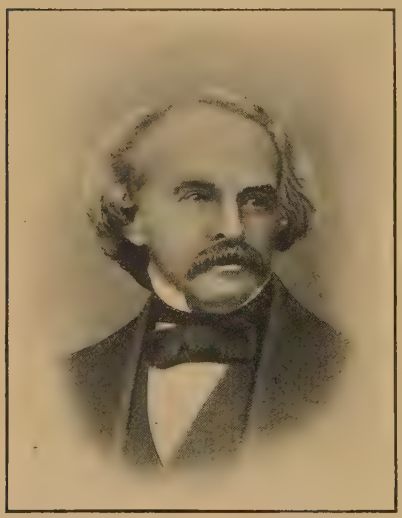
NATHANIEL HAWTHORNE, 1804–1864

A Product of New England. — While Cooper seems to have had no spiritual or literary ancestry, and while Poe's was a composite the elements of which it is difficult to place, Hawthorne's was, like Bryant's, pure New England. His forefathers were prominent in the life of the colony; but any pride he felt from this fact was almost destroyed by the recollection that one of them as a judge sanctioned persecution of witches and Quakers. Endicott's Puritan followers Hawthorne calls "most dismal wretches"; but the bent of his mind was a direct inheritance from these forefathers. The life of the soul, the conscience of man, was what interested him; and whatever he saw, read, or thought gave rise to a moral lesson. Moreover, both his reading and his writing would on the whole have pleased seventeenth century Massachusetts. His boyhood "amusements"

[1] Tennyson was mistaken regarding the neglect. A monument had been erected over Poe's grave in 1875.

were *Pilgrim's Progress* and *The Faerie Queene;* and his manhood products were "the most consistently gloomy of English novels of the first rank," and a number of "singularly dismal compositions."[1] *The Scarlet Letter* is, in the author's own words, "a tale of human frailty and sorrow."

Nathaniel Hawthorne was born in Salem, Massachusetts, July 4, 1804. Early in life he acquired what he called his "cursed habit of solitude," a habit which was encouraged by irregular schooling under tutors. In 1821 he entered Bowdoin College, Maine, in the class with Longfellow, and with Franklin Pierce, afterwards President of the nation. At college, where he was called "Oberon," because of his beauty and his romantic stories, he was not a diligent student, but managed to attain distinction in Latin and in composition. "The best thing Bowdoin College did for him," says Conway, "was to give him three or four friends."



NATHANIEL HAWTHORNE.

"For many years the obscurest man of letters in America." (Preface to *Twice Told Tales.*)

Beginnings of Authorship. — After graduation in 1825 he returned to Salem, and remained there in seclusion twelve

[1] Henry James, *Life of Hawthorne*, referring to *The Scarlet Letter*, and "the best of the *Mosses*."

years. About the time of his return he wrote to his sister: "I shall never make a distinguished figure in the world, and all I hope or wish is to plod along with the multitude." He wrote much during these years, but published little, and that little under assumed names, for example, "Oberon," which we can understand, and "Rev. A. A. Royce," which we cannot. With such methods and such lack of ambition it is no wonder that he could call himself in 1837 "the obscurest man of letters in America." In 1828 had appeared *Fanshawe*, a college story which he afterwards suppressed. From 1830 various short-stories and sketches of his found their way into the then popular annuals, the best of which appeared in 1837 as *Twice Told Tales*, a second volume being added five years later.

At Brook Farm. — In 1841 Hawthorne took "the only apparently freakish action of his life" — joined Brook Farm, a socialistic community just organized in a suburb of Boston (West Roxbury), one of those expressions of Transcendentalism [1] in which, according to Lowell, "everything was common except common sense." Hawthorne lost a thousand dollars in it besides his time, and seems to have regretted the latter more than the former. "Is it a praiseworthy matter," he writes, "that I have spent five golden months in providing food for cows and horses? It is not so." Elsewhere he asserts that any amount of physical labor is incompatible with intellectual. One good result of Hawthorne's experience at Brook Farm was *The Blithedale Romance*. While he claimed that this is not a picture of the community, he admitted that he had the community in mind, and "occasionally availed himself of his actual reminiscences."

In July, 1842, Hawthorne married Miss Sophie Peabody, daughter of a Salem physician, to whom he had been

[1] See page 160, below.

engaged three years; and they took up their residence at Concord, in the Old Manse, formerly occupied by Emerson. Here they lived a supremely happy and quiet life for several years, until through the influence of friends, Hawthorne was appointed surveyor of the Custom House at Salem. In the same year he published *Mosses from an Old Manse*,

The Old Manse.

a collection of tales and sketches, not all written in Concord, and some written twelve or fifteen years before.

"**The Scarlet Letter.**" — He produced nothing during his three years in the Custom House; but *The Scarlet Letter* took shape in his mind, and was published in 1850. This, by common consent his greatest work, is a study of punishment, with the moral: "Be true! Be true! Be true! Show freely to the world, if not your worst, yet some trait

whereby the worst may be inferred!" The punishment of the minister, Arthur Dimmesdale, was not the recollection of sin, but the consciousness that, because he was concealing a sin, his every moment of life was a lie. Though Julian Hawthorne records that his father "did not think it a natural book for him to write," it seems eminently natural to a student of Hawthorne's work as a whole; for not only is sin in various forms the theme of many of his short-stories and of his four romances, but two of the *Twice Told Tales* are directly connected with *The Scarlet Letter.*

In *The Minister's Black Veil* Rev. Mr. Hooper wears a piece of black crape constantly before his face, typifying the hiding by every man of his secret sins from his neighbors. In *Endicott and the Red Cross,* in a group of malefactors undergoing punishment, there "was a young woman whose doom it was to wear the letter A on the breast of her gown. . . . Sporting with her infamy, the lost and desperate creature had embroidered the fatal token in scarlet cloth, with golden thread and the nicest art of needle-work; so that the capital A might have been thought to mean Admirable, or anything rather than Adulteress."

It was said that Hawthorne did not know how *The Scarlet Letter* was going to end; but his son has told us that the anecdote is connected with the wrong story — that it was true of *Rappaccini's Daughter,* in the *Mosses.* And indeed, it is hard to see how the *Letter* could end otherwise than as it does end. There is no hint of forgiveness, and none is needed; but the uncovering of the minister's sin and the defeat of the wronged husband's plan for revenge are essential to the working out of the theme.

The Scarlet Letter made Hawthorne's fame secure; but in an introduction called *The Custom House* he offended his townsmen by holding a number of them up to ridicule. Although in the preface to the second edition he asserted

that he had written the introduction with perfect good humor, and that he saw no reason to alter it, Salem was unconvinced, and the town ceased from that time to be a congenial abode. Accordingly, in the spring of 1850 he moved to a cottage in the Berkshire Hills, and remained there a year and a half. Finding this location unsuited to

THE HOUSE OF SEVEN GABLES.

his health, he again moved, this time to West Newton, near Boston, where the Peabodys lived. Six months later he purchased "The Wayside," a twenty-acre country residence at Concord, his last home.

"Seven Gables," and "Blithedale." — Two other romances were written during these years of migration — *The House of Seven Gables*, in the Berkshires, and *The Blithedale Romance*, at West Newton. For most readers the former of

these is more agreeable reading than Hawthorne's other long stories; for the glimpses of life in Salem are interesting, and the Pyncheon family, around whom the story centers, are more entertaining than any other group in Hawthorne. The theme is the visiting of the father's sins upon the children to the third and fourth generation; but the quality of humor is more prominent here than elsewhere, the author comes nearer than usual to being a realist, the story ends satisfactorily, and the somber moral is not oppressive. The inspiration of *The Blithedale Romance* — the author's experience at Brook Farm — has been mentioned. It is the least interesting of the romances, and such interest as it has is not for young people. In it is found Zenobia, "the high-spirited Woman, bruising herself against the narrow limitations of her sex," whom one biographer considers Hawthorne's "only very definite attempt at the representation of a character." There is little action in the story, and the moral is too plain and manifest — a criticism Hawthorne himself passed on *The Great Stone Face.*

"**The Marble Faun.**" — It seems well at this point to disregard the chronological order, and mention *The Marble Faun,* written during his residence abroad and published in 1860. This obscure and mysterious story raised many questions, to all of which the author replied that for those asking such the book is a failure. Its chief interest is as a picture of Rome under its two most striking aspects: as the fountain-head of Roman Catholicism, and as the land of art and the favorite resort for artists. This background seems at times rather overdone; but it has made the book almost a standard guide for Rome — a fact which would have amazed and probably disgusted the author had he lived to know it.

Consul at Liverpool. — The residence abroad just mentioned began when Hawthorne had been only a year at

"The Wayside," his new Concord home; and the occasion of it was his appointment by President Pierce, his old college mate, as consul at Liverpool. He held the post the full term of four years, but was by no means a shining success in England. Being of an unsociable, retiring disposition, he met very few literary men of high rank. Instead of living in

"WAYSIDE," CONCORD.
Hawthorne's last home.

the city of Liverpool, he took a house in a suburb across the Mersey; and to a friend he wrote: "I like the situation all the better because it will render it impossible for me to go to parties, or to give parties myself, and will keep me out of a good deal of nonsense." His volume dealing with England and the English, *Our Old Home*, is far from satisfactory and gave great offense to that country, just as

The Custom House had to Salem. Its chief defect is that it is based on very limited observation, and that not of representative classes of the people.

Retiring from the consulate in the autumn of 1857, Hawthorne went to the Continent, where he spent a year and a half, mostly in Rome. Here he got the material

DINING ROOM AT "WAYSIDE."

for the comprehensible part of *The Marble Faun;* but the city was not more tolerable to him than Liverpool. Liverpool had been "smoky, noisy, dirty, pestilential" — "a most detestable place as a residence" — "a black and miserable hole." Rome he bitterly detested. "In fact," he wrote, "I wish the very site had been obliterated before I ever saw it."

Return Home, and Death. — Hawthorne reached Concord in June, 1860, on the eve of the war, was cordially received by the villagers, and appeared to be more interested in them than formerly. His health showed signs of breaking, and the struggle of his countrymen distressed him greatly. His strange attitude toward it is indicated in a letter to his friend Bridge: "Though I approve of the war as much as any man, I don't quite understand what we are fighting for, or what definite result can be expected. Whatever happens next, I must say that I rejoice that the old Union is smashed. We never were one people, and never really had a country since the constitution was formed." And this man had said New England was as big a spot as he could hold in his heart, yet was allied with the political party whose strength was in the South! Early in 1864 Dr. Oliver Wendell Holmes advised him to take a quiet tour, though neither physician nor patient had any confidence in the outcome. On this tour Hawthorne started with Pierce as companion. The end came in Plymouth, New Hampshire, where they had stopped for the night. He was buried in Sleepy Hollow Cemetery, Concord.

The Short-stories. — Hawthorne holds a place as writer of short-stories second only (if really second) to Poe, and it is his work in this field that attracts young readers. We have noted that Poe wrote analytical tales which have no parallel in Hawthorne. It should be noted also that Hawthorne wrote of New England colonial history as Poe could have written of no definite time or place. In *The Gray Champion, Endicott and the Red Cross, Young Goodman Brown, Roger Malvin's Burial, The Maypole of Merry Mount, Drowne's Wooden Image* — to mention only a few of the most striking — the spirit and times of his forefathers are made to live again for us. While, as we have said, the

bent of his mind was a direct inheritance from these forefathers, he had no sympathy with their ideals of life. *The Maypole of Merry Mount* (*Twice Told Tales*) presents the Puritans in the attitude of their fellows in old England, who opposed bear-baiting, not because it gave pain to the bear, but because it gave pleasure to the spectators. Endicott is here represented as opposing the Maypole dances because the time would be better spent by these youths in making themselves "valiant to fight, and sober to toil, and pious to pray."

In *Drowne's Wooden Image* (*Mosses*) is a mixture of this historical background with an allegory. The scene is Boston "in the good old times"; and the story tells of a wood carver, Drowne, who in one "brief season of excitement, kindled by love," made a female figure which according to an accepted rumor came to life. Only this one great work did he perform; but Hawthorne draws the moral that "the very highest state to which a human being can attain, in its loftiest aspirations, is its truest and most natural state." *Young Goodman Brown* deals, like *The Minister's Black Veil* and *The Scarlet Letter*, with the problem of concealed sin. Brown has the real natures of his most honored neighbors revealed to him; and, seeing them hypocrites, becomes from that time "a stern, a sad, a darkly meditative, a distrustful, if not a desperate man."

Books for Children. — Three of Hawthorne's collections of tales are addressed to even younger readers than are the stories we have just been discussing. These are *Grandfather's Chair*, *A Wonder Book*, and *Tanglewood Tales*, the first a group from early New England history, and the others from the field of myth and legend. *Grandfather's Chair* was written at the instance of his wife's sister; but the later volumes were the outcome of his own experience as an unusually devoted and companionable father.

We cannot leave Hawthorne without a mention of his *Note-Books* of America, England, and France and Italy, which one writer calls the key to his character. They were written without any thought of publication, the American notes covering a long space of time. The foreign books are diaries, and contain much material subsequently used in stories. In *The Marble Faun*, especially, incident after incident is narrated and scene after scene is described just as we find them in the *Italian Note-Book*.[1] The series shows him to be a careful observer of people and things, constantly striving to make countenances disclose souls; a man of prejudices, chiefly those of a patriotic American, with at the same time an openness to new influences; a lover of solitude; and the possessor of a keen sense of humor.

HAWTHORNE'S "STUDY" IN THE GROUNDS AT CONCORD.

THE LITERATURE OF SLAVERY AND DISUNION

We have said above that politics, literature, and life in America during this period were dominated by the slavery

[1] Cf., *e.g.*, Chap. VII, conversation between Miriam and Hilda regarding the portrait of Beatrice Cenci, with the entry in the *Note-Book* for Feb. 20, 1858; Chap. XX, description of the Church of the Capuchins and a monk's body lying in state, with *Note-Book* for Feb. 17.

question. Most of the writings have little or no literary merit; but even the least of them is worthy of note as part of a movement producing Webster's, Lincoln's, and Calhoun's speeches, and some of the most truly inspired poems that Timrod, Hayne, and Whittier wrote.

Early Attacks on Slavery. — The struggle did not begin in the nineteenth century. As early as 1700 there appeared in New England a small book protesting against slavery, *The Selling of Joseph*, by Samuel Sewall, Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Massachusetts. For nearly half of the century a continuous crusade against slavery was made by John Woolman, discussed in the preceding chapter. In 1778 Virginia prohibited the slave trade, and the next year Jefferson advocated, unsuccessfully, of course, emancipation for Virginia. A strong presentation of the abuses of slavery appeared in 1782 in Crèvecœur's *Letters of an American Farmer*, where an account is given of the death by torture of a slave assassin in the South, and a statement is quoted from a Southerner that such treatment was essential to their very existence.

Progress of Antislavery Movement. — Periodical literature opposed to slavery begins about 1821, with William Goodell's *Investigator* in Rhode Island and Benjamin Lundy's *Genius of Universal Emancipation* in Ohio. Far more influential than either of these was the *Liberator*, edited by William Lloyd Garrison, who had for a short time been associated with Lundy's journal. Garrison continued the *Liberator* from 1831 to 1865, retiring when the fight was won. In the same year with this paper Whittier entered the struggle with a poem addressed to Garrison. Two years later came Webster's reply to Calhoun's nullification speech, which clinched for the New Englander the title of "Defender of the Constitution." Webster was not interested in the abolition of slavery for itself, but was forced into the aboli-

tionist ranks by his championship of Constitutional government as opposed to state sovereignty. Longfellow wrote seven rather mild poems against slavery in 1842; but the next year came Lowell with his *Stanzas on Freedom*, and began an abolition campaign in verse which is second only to Whittier's in intensity and vigor.

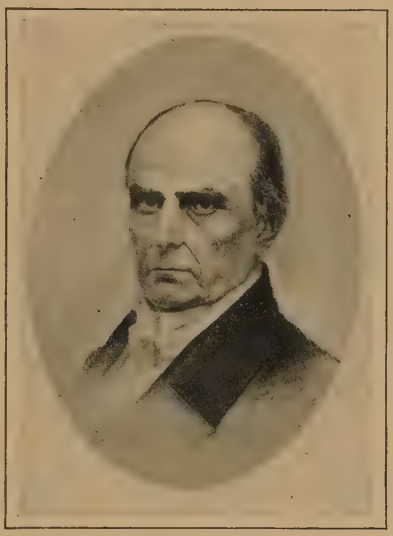
The greatest of all the opponents of slavery, however, did not take a prominent place in national affairs until 1856, when he aided in organizing the Republican party, — made up of the antislavery element in all the old parties. This was Abraham Lincoln, who, nominated four years later for the presidency "for his availability, — that is, because he had no history," says Lowell, is now ranked, as the same writer predicted he would be, "among the most prudent of statesmen and the most successful of rulers." Lincoln, like Webster, did not believe in the right of the government to abolish slavery, but insisted on its right to prohibit the extension of slavery into new territory.

Of these we select for study in this period Webster and Lincoln, reserving Whittier, Longfellow, and Lowell for the next chapter.

DANIEL WEBSTER, 1782–1852

Life to 1830. — Webster was born in Salisbury, New Hampshire, on January 18, 1782. He was educated at Phillips Exeter Academy and Dartmouth College, graduating from the last named institution in 1801. He studied law, and in 1807 began to practice in Portsmouth, New Hampshire. In 1816 he removed to Boston, and soon took his place among the leaders in his profession. Two years later he conducted a case for his Alma Mater before the United States Supreme Court, and laid the foundation of his fame as an interpreter of the Constitution. In 1822 he was elected to Congress from Boston, and was twice re-

elected. Three famous nonpolitical occasional addresses (*i. e.*, prepared for special occasions) belong to this period: *First Settlement of New England,* on the two hundredth anniversary of the landing at Plymouth Rock; the first *Bunker Hill Oration,* on laying the corner-stone of the monument; and *Adams and Jefferson,* a eulogy on the two ex-presidents, who died on July 4, 1826.



DANIEL WEBSTER.

Looking at this picture, one has little difficulty in believing Webster to be the original of "Old Stony Phiz," in Hawthorne's *The Great Stone Face.*

Webster versus Hayne. — From 1827 to 1841, and from 1845 to 1850, Webster was United States Senator from Massachusetts, serving for two years between these terms as Secretary of State. During the first of these periods he was in the midst of the anti-slavery struggle, and made the two notable speeches which established his fame.

The first of these great speeches was the *Reply to Hayne* in 1830. Robert Y. Hayne, Senator from South Carolina, had spoken at length in defense of his state's decision that she could "judge of the violation of the Constitution by the Federal Government and protect her citizens from the operations of unconstitutional laws." The speech was the first outspoken championing of nullification, the parent of seces-

sion. Webster's reply set forth what he believed to be "the true principles of the Constitution under which we are here assembled." He contended that the Constitution emanates "immediately from the people," and "is not the creature of the state governments." As a consequence no state can pass "on constitutionality or unconstitutionality of the laws"; this is left to the Supreme Court by an act of the first Congress. On the subject of slavery Webster took the position that it was in the hands of the states, and he would not interfere with it. "I go for the Constitution as it is, and for the Union as it is." Returning to this in a wonderful and unprepared conclusion, he ended with these words: "Liberty *and* Union, now and forever, one and inseparable." The speech had a tremendous effect, and in the words of Senator Lodge, one of Webster's biographers, it "marks the highest point attained by Mr. Webster as a public man."

Webster versus Calhoun. — The second great speech referred to was the reply three years later to Calhoun, who had taken Hayne's place in the Senate. In this Webster elaborated the doctrine of the Constitution laid down in the *Reply to Hayne*. Calhoun's theory was that "the Constitution is a compact between sovereign states," and that any state can break the compact whenever, in its judgment, Congress has violated the Constitution. Webster denied these propositions, asserting that "by the Constitution, we mean the fundamental law"; that nullification, the South Carolina doctrine, is revolution and anarchy; that "all power is with the people," not the states, and "they alone are sovereign"; and finally, that by "the first great principle of all republican liberty . . . the majority must govern." Of Webster's speech G. T. Curtis says: "Whoever would understand that theory of the Constitution of the United States which regards it as the enactment of a

fundamental law must go to this speech to find the best and clearest exposition." Of Webster's method of debate Calhoun, after years of verbal conflict with him, said that Webster stated an opponent's arguments more fairly than anybody he had ever seen.

The "Seventh of March" Speech. — Webster's last notable speech in the Senate was in 1850 in favor of Clay's compromise, which both hoped would give a basis on which the North and the South could remain united. This effort, known as the *Seventh of March Speech*, was received by many in the North as an act almost of treason. He seemed to give his sanction to slavery; but it should be remembered that he had never advocated abolition, and that throughout his public career the preservation of the Union had been his controlling motive. Public opinion of his time is well represented by Whittier's lament, *Ichabod;* and the change in opinion which time and the return of reason brought, in the same poet's *The Lost Occasion*, written thirty years afterwards.

In 1850 Webster left the Senate to become for the second time Secretary of State. He returned to his home in Marshfield, Massachusetts, in September, 1852, and died there on October 24, after a short illness. The antagonism aroused by his *Seventh of March Speech* did not long continue; and most Americans now will probably say with Professor Richardson that the maintenance of the Union "was due to the long, patient work of Daniel Webster more than to that of any other American statesman." Surely this is no small accomplishment for the lifetime of even "a parliamentary Hercules," as Thomas Carlyle called him.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN, 1809-1865

Although no account of Lincoln's life is really needed here, we think it will be of interest to quote entire his autobiographical sketch, written in 1859, since it is little known, and gives an excellent insight into his character and his literary style.

Autobiography. — "I was born February 12, 1809, in Hardin County, Kentucky. My parents were both born in Virginia, of undistinguished families — second families, perhaps I should say. My mother, who died in my tenth year, was of a family of the name of Hanks, some of whom now reside in Adams, and others in Macon County, Illinois. My paternal grandfather, Abraham Lincoln, emigrated from Rockingham County, Virginia, to Kentucky about 1781 or 1782, where a year or two later he was killed by the Indians, not in battle, but by stealth, when he was laboring to open a farm in the forest. His ancestors, who were Quakers, went to Virginia from Berks County, Pennsylvania. An effort to identify them with the New England family of the same name ended in nothing more definite than a similarity of Christian names in both families, such as Enoch, Levi, Mordecai, Solomon, Abraham, and the like.

EARLY HOME OF LINCOLN IN KENTUCKY.

"My father, at the death of his father, was but six years of age, and he grew up literally without education. He removed from Kentucky to what is now Spencer County, Indiana, in my eighth year. We reached our new home

about the same time the State came into the Union. It was a wild region, with many bears and other wild animals still in the woods. There I grew up. There were some schools, so called, but no qualification was ever required of a teacher beyond 'readin', writin', and cipherin'' to the rule of three. If a straggler supposed to understand Latin happened to sojourn in the neighborhood he was looked upon as a wizard. There was absolutely nothing to excite ambition for education. Of course, when I came of age I did not know much. Still, somehow, I could read, write, and cipher to the rule of three, but that was all. I have not been to school since. The little advance I now have upon this store of education I have picked up from time to time under the pressure of necessity.

"I was raised to farm work, which I continued till I was twenty-two. At twenty-one I came to Illinois, Macon County. Then I got to New Salem, at that time in Sangamon, now in Menard County, where I remained a year as a sort of clerk in a store. Then came the Black Hawk War, and I was elected a captain of volunteers, a success which gave me more pleasure than any I have had since. I went the campaign, was elected, ran for the legislature the same year (1832), and was beaten — the only time I ever have been beaten by the people. The next and three succeeding biennial elections I was elected to the legislature. I was not a candidate afterward. During this legislative period I had studied law and removed to Springfield to practice it. In 1846 I was once elected to the lower house of Congress. Was not a candidate for reëlection. From 1849 to 1854, both inclusive, practiced law more assiduously than ever before. Always a Whig in politics, and generally on the Whig electoral tickets, making active canvasses. I was losing interest in politics when the repeal of the Missouri Compromise aroused me again. What I have done since then is pretty well known.

"If any personal description of me is thought desirable it may be said I am, in height, six feet four inches, nearly; lean in flesh, weighing on an average one hundred and eighty pounds; dark complexion, with coarse black hair and gray eyes. No other marks or brands recollected."

Statue of Lincoln by French.

Defeat Brings Victory. — Only one of the things done by Lincoln after 1854 need be mentioned. In 1858 he was nominated for the United States Senate by the Republicans of Illinois, and was defeated by Senator Douglas after a series of joint debates and a hard campaign which was carried into every village in the state. Lincoln lost the Senatorship; but so clear and forcible was his exposition of the principles underlying the contest that he became the logical candidate of the Republican party for President in 1860. His success against the divided Democracy, his magnificent performance of his duty as Chief Executive in the

face of untold difficulties, and his tragic and untimely death are matters of everyday knowledge of the average American schoolboy.

General Characteristics of His Writings. — Lincoln's position in American literature is truly unique. With less than six months' schooling, and with nothing in the way of cultured surroundings to make up the deficiency, he was amazed to find himself followed by an eastern college professor, who took notes on his speeches and made them the basis of lectures to classes in English. But this occurrence is not amazing to those who read thoughtfully the letters and addresses which constitute his "literary works." Sincerity, fairness, humor and pathos, high morality, power of condensed utterance — these qualities produced a style which the French Academy praised and commended as a model for princes. He could not — or would not — indulge in oratorical flights like Webster, nor was he carried away by passion as were abolitionists like Garrison. But he had the power of penetrating to the very heart of a question and presenting its life in language which not only *might* but *must* be understood. Edward Everett, who delivered the oration of the day at Gettysburg, wrote to Lincoln regarding the latter's brief address: "I should be glad if I could flatter myself that I came as near to the central idea of the occasion in two hours as you did in two minutes."

His Masterpieces. — A number of Lincoln's utterances are universally accepted as classics — *The Gettysburg Address*, the two *Inaugurals*, the *Cooper Institute Address*, the *Letter to Greeley*, the *Speech in Independence Hall*, the *Last Public Address*. But this is far from an exhaustive list. The *Letter to Mrs. Bixby*, a Massachusetts woman who had lost five sons in the war, in a hundred and thirty-one words gets to "the central idea of the occasion" as tenderly and as forcibly as does *The Gettysburg Address*. His correspondence with

Military Governor Shepley, of Lousiana, sets forth in unmistakable terms his opposition to the proposed "carpet-bag" government which, instituted after his death, produced the evils of Reconstruction, and the long delay in the reconciliation of North and South.

Throughout the debates with Douglas in 1858, Lincoln refused to be led astray by his opponent's ingeniously worded questions and arguments; and in replying to them, repeatedly attacked Douglas's indifference to the question whether slavery was right or wrong. Douglas said he didn't care whether slavery was "voted up or down" in the territories; to which Lincoln in the last debate replied: "Any man can say that who does not see anything wrong in slavery; but no man can logically say it who does see a wrong in it; because no man can logically say he don't[1] care whether a wrong is voted up or voted down." His sense of humor doubtless did much to sustain him at the most trying times; as, for example, when telling Kentuckians at Cincinnati (in September, 1859) what the Republican party meant to do with them: "We mean to marry your girls when we have a chance — the white ones, I mean, and I have the honor to inform you that I once did have a chance that way."

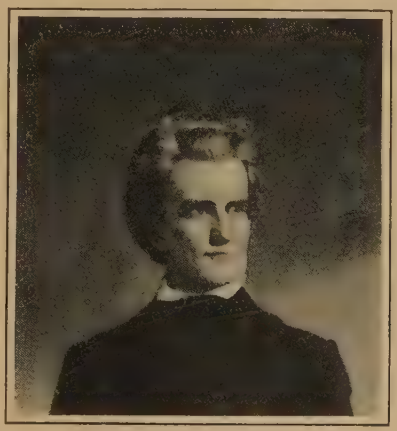
Lowell on Lincoln. — Lowell has well summarized in a few sentences the distinguishing excellences of Lincoln's writing. "He forgets himself so entirely in his object as to give his *I* the sympathetic and persuasive effect of *We* with the great body of his countrymen. Homely, dispassionate, showing all the rough-edged process of his thought as it goes along, yet arriving at his conclusions with an honest kind of everyday logic, he is so eminently our representative man,

[1] In view of the frequency with which this grammatical error is heard to-day from supposedly educated persons, it is perhaps hardly necessary to apologize for Lincoln.

that, when he speaks, it seems as if the people were listening to their own thinking aloud. The dignity of his thought owes nothing to any ceremonial garb of words, but to the manly movement that comes of settled purpose and an energy of reason that knows not what rhetoric means. . . . He has always addressed the intelligences of men, never their prejudice, their passion, or their ignorance."

JOHN CALDWELL CALHOUN, 1782–1850

The foremost defender of slavery and state rights in the halls of Congress, and the ablest opponent of Webster, was John C. Calhoun, of South Carolina. He was considered by the poet Whittier "the most powerful intellect of his period." His formal education was begun late — at the age of eighteen, when he was tutored by a brother-in-law in preparation for Yale. Two years later he entered the Junior class in that institution, from which he was graduated with honors in 1804. Four years later he was elected to the South Carolina legislature, and served one term.



JOHN C. CALHOUN.
From a painting at Clemson Agricultural College.

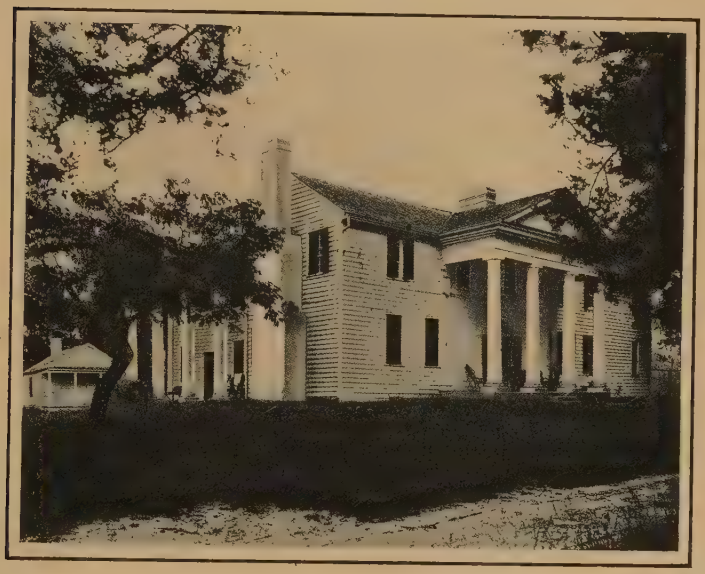
Becomes a National Figure. — In 1811 Calhoun entered the arena of national politics, being elected to the House of

Representatives when the clouds of the second war with England were already forming. In his first speech in Congress he urged preparation for war, admitting that lack of preparation was his only reason for not advocating war at once. After three terms in the House, Calhoun became Secretary of War in Monroe's cabinet, retaining the position to the end of the President's second term. As Secretary he performed a notable service in bringing order and economy into his department, and in greatly increasing the efficiency of the Military Academy at West Point.

Vice President, Senator, Secretary of State. — From 1825 to 1832 Calhoun was Vice President. In November of the latter year he resigned in order to become Senator from South Carolina, succeeding Robert Y. Hayne. For eleven years following he was the recognized leader of the party of slavery and state rights. He resigned his seat in the Senate to seek the Democratic nomination for President; and failing to secure this, accepted the Secretaryship of State under President Tyler. During his occupancy of this post, which lasted only a little more than a year, he performed two important duties. One was a prominent part in the negotiations which led later to the annexation of Texas; the other in the settlement of the dispute with Great Britain over Oregon. In 1845 he returned to the Senate, and continued a member of that body till his death five years later.

Champion of State Sovereignty. — John C. Calhoun will not be remembered for his connection with Texas, Oregon, or West Point; he will be remembered as the unfaltering, uncompromising advocate of state sovereignty and its natural sequels, nullification and secession — doctrines which he did not originate, but which he analyzed and reduced to logical form. The theory of state sovereignty was set forth by him in three documents: *The South Carolina Exposition*, an essay published in 1828; *Address to the People of South*

Carolina, 1831; and a letter to Governor Hamilton, of South Carolina, in 1832. Of the last, Calhoun's biographer, von Holst, says: "This letter to Governor Hamilton of South Carolina is the final and classical exposition of the theory of state sovereignty. Nothing new has ever been added to it."



CALHOUN MANSION.
Now one of the Clemson Agricultural College buildings.

Six months later, through his speech in the Senate already referred to, the doctrine was laid before the whole country in a close, logical argument on this text: "The people of Carolina believe that the Union is a union of States, and not of individuals; that it was formed by the States, and that the citizens of the several States were bound to it through the acts of their several States; that each State ratified the

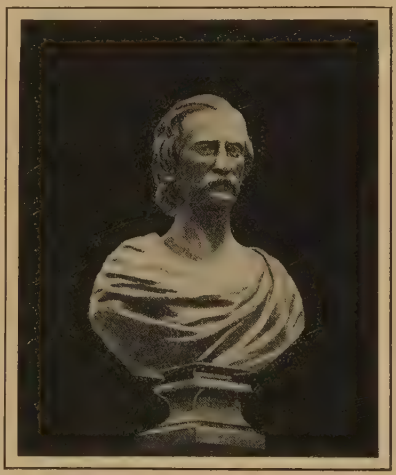
Constitution for itself, and that it was only by such ratification of a State that any obligation was imposed upon its citizens." So powerful was the effect of the speech in the Senate that the opposition immediately sought Webster as the only man capable of replying. Not once in the seventeen years remaining to him did Calhoun waver in his position; and his last speech, March 4, 1850, contained these words: "I have exerted myself to arrest it [*i.e.*, the agitation of the slavery question], with the intention of saving the Union, if it could be done; and if it could not, to save the section where it has pleased Providence to cast my lot, and which I sincerely believe has justice and the Constitution on its side."

The statement in the last clause quoted — regarding his belief in the right of his position — finds very general acceptance to-day. That Calhoun was in error in his interpretation of the Constitution is probably the opinion of the majority of Americans, though an illustrious minority offers strong grounds for a different view. In any case few will question the integrity of his motives, or deny that "he acted under the firm conviction of an imperious duty towards the South and towards the Union." Had he lived, moreover, to see his South go down in defeat, he would have approved the sentiment closing Hayne's *Forgotten:*

"Forgotten! Tho' a thousand years should pass,
Methinks our air will throb with memory's thrills,
A conscious grief weigh down the faltering grass,
A pathos shroud the hills,
Waves roll lamenting, autumn sunsets yearn
For the old time's return!"

TIMROD AND HAYNE

Two Southern Poets. — At this point should be considered two writers of the South who gave expression in verse to sentiments diametrically opposed to those of Whittier and Lowell. Both served in the Confederate army; of each may be said what Dr. Mabie says of one: "He touched the two themes which lay deepest in his heart, love of nature and love of the personal and social ideals of the Old South, with perfect sincerity, with deep tenderness, and with lyric sweetness." These two poets are Henry Timrod and Paul Hamilton Hayne, lifelong friends and natives of Charleston, South Carolina, then the literary center of the South. The intimate association of these men through life and the virtual identity of their poetic creeds make it desirable to treat them together.



BUST OF TIMROD.
From the monument in Charleston, S.C.

Henry Timrod (1829–1867). — Timrod was of German descent. His father and grandfather had been distinguished citizens, and his father had been known as a poet. Henry studied for a time at the University of Georgia, but because of poverty and ill health was unable to graduate. He then studied law, but like Byrant, Irving, and other

born men of letters, found it distasteful, and soon gave his best thought and strength to poetry, supporting himself by private tutoring. He contributed to the *Southern Literary Messenger* and other magazines, and brought out a volume of poems in Boston in 1860. At the outbreak of the Civil War he enlisted, and during a short term of service wrote

Confederate Monument in Magnolia Cemetery, Charleston.
The scene of Timrod's finest poem.

Carolina, *The Cotton Boll*, and other stirring war songs. Compelled by the failure of his health to leave the ranks, he became correspondent of a Charleston paper, and in 1864 became editor of the *South Carolinian*, published in Columbia. He married happily, but within a year lost everything with the fall of the Confederacy. When asked about himself by his friend Hayne, Timrod wrote: "I can embody

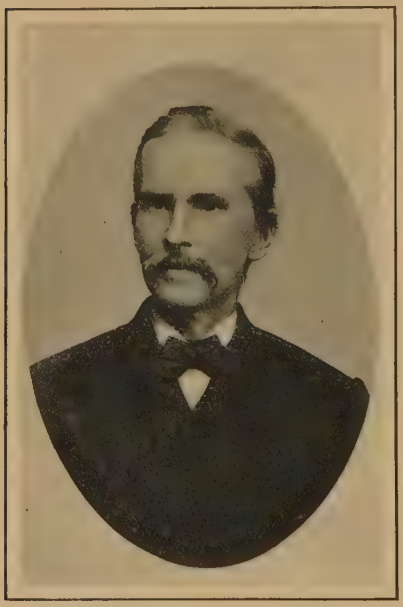
it all in a few words — beggary, starvation, death, bitter grief, utter want of hope." The disease which had long racked him was aggravated by his mental suffering, and he died of consumption on October 6, 1867.

STONE MARKING GRAVES OF TIMROD AND HIS SON.

In Trinity Church Cemetery, Columbia, S.C. Erected by the Timrod Memorial Association in 1901.

Paul Hamilton Hayne (1830–1886). — Hayne was born less than a month after Timrod. Early in life he lost his father, a lieutenant in the navy, and was reared by his uncle, Governor Robert Y. Hayne, mentioned above as antagonist of Webster in the Senate. As Governor Hayne was wealthy, his nephew enjoyed the best social and educational advantages, and was graduated from Charleston College in 1852. Then, following others of like genius, he studied law a while, but soon yielded to the call of the Muse, and began to write for various periodicals, putting out in 1855 his first collection of poems, and two other volumes before the opening of the war. In 1852 he had married a French surgeon's daughter, Miss Mary Michel, who was "the inspiration,

the stay, the joy of his life." During the war he was on Governor Pickens's staff. Weak physically, as was Timrod, Hayne could accomplish little in the field; but, also like his friend, he rendered good service to the cause by his songs of encouragement. After the war he moved to "Copse Hill," not far from Augusta, Georgia, where in "a crazy, wooden shanty, dignified as a cottage," he and his devoted wife spent the last twenty years of his life. He continued to write in both verse and prose, and his home was the Mecca of many poets and other friends. He died July 6, 1886, going to his reward with a calmness that reminds one of Emerson's *Terminus*. Hayne's poem *In Harbor* closes with the following beautiful stanza:



PAUL HAMILTON HAYNE.
From a portrait in possession of the poet's son, William H. Hayne, through whose kindness this and the two following photographs are reproduced here.

"I know it is over, over,
I know it is over at last!
Down sail! the sheathed anchor uncover,
For the stress of the voyage has passed:
Life, like a tempest of ocean,
Hath outbreathed its ultimate blast:

There's but a faint sobbing sea-ward,
While the calm of the tide deepens lee-ward;
And behold! like a welcoming quiver
Of heart-pulses throbbed thro' the river,
Those lights in the harbor at last,
The heavenly harbor at last!"

Poets of the Confederacy. — Lincoln in his *Second Inaugural* refers to the belief of both North and South in the justice

"Copse Hill."

Hayne's home after the war. Here, says Margaret J. Preston, he "fought the fight of life with uncomplaining bravery, and persisted in being happy."

of their cause. "Both read the same Bible, and pray to the same God; and each invokes His aid against the other." The men of South Carolina and Virginia and Texas felt that when their states left the Union, true patriotism

called them to go with their states. The war poems of Timrod and Hayne express this confidence repeatedly.

"We battle for our Country's right,"

writes Timrod in *A Cry to Arms;* and in *Ethnogenesis:*

"the very soil,
And all the generous wealth it gives to toil,
And all for which we love our noble land,
Shall fight beside, and through us."

Hayne, in *My Mother-land,* celebrating South Carolina's leadership in secession, says:

"our South erect and proud,
Fronted the issue, and though lulled too long,
Felt her great spirit nerved, her patriot valor strong."

They shared the general feeling of the South that the struggle was on its part a fight "for cherished home and land," as Hayne wrote in *Scene in a Country Hospital;* and both celebrated in vigorous lines the part played by Southern women. Thus, Timrod, in *The Two Armies:*

"No breeze of battle ever fanned
The colors of that tender band;
Its office is beside the bed,
Where throbs some sick or wounded head.

* * * * *

Nor is that army's gentle might
Unfelt amid the deadly fight;
It nerves the son's, the husband's hand,
It points the lover's fearless brand;
It thrills the languid, warms the cold,
Gives even new courage to the bold;
And sometimes lifts the veriest clod
To its own lofty trust in God."

The war, however, left no trace of bitterness in these men. In Hayne's *Complete Poems,* 1882, the group of war

poems is prefaced with this sentence: "These poems are republished with no ill-feeling, nor with the desire to revive

HAYNE SIDE OF THE COLE MONUMENT, AUGUSTA, GEORGIA.
The other sides are memorials to three other Southern poets — Father Abram J. Ryan, Sidney Lanier, and James R. Randall.

old issues; but only as a record and a sacred duty." *Our Martyrs* closes with these words:

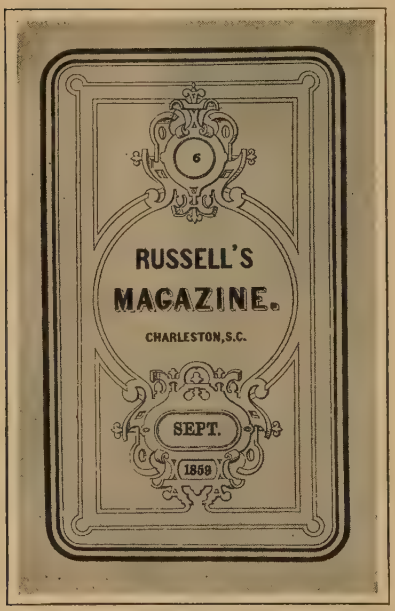
"Oh, Thou! that hast charms of healing,
Descend on a widowed land,
And bind o'er the wounds of feeling,
The balms of thy mystic hand;
Till the lives that lament and languish,
Renewed by a touch divine,
From the depths of their mortal anguish,
May rise to the calm of Thine."

The invocation to peace at the close of Timrod's *Christmas* is in the same tone:

"Let every sacred fane
Call its sad votaries to the throne of God,
And, with the cloister and the tented sod,
Join in one solemn strain!

* * * * *

Peace on the whirring marts,
Peace where the scholar thinks, the hunter roams,
Peace, God of Peace! peace, peace, in all our homes,
And peace in all our hearts!"



FACSIMILE OF COVER OF *Russell's Magazine.*

The publication of the Charleston group. Hayne was editor-in-chief. (New York Public Library.)

Poets of Nature.— Besides being remembered for their war poems, Timrod and Hayne take high rank as writers of nature lyrics, in which the woodland sights and sounds of the South receive worthy praise. Professor Wendell puts Timrod's *Cotton Boll* in the same class with Whittier's poems on New England landscapes; and Colonel Higginson thinks Hayne has a "softer, richer, sweeter" note than Bryant. It has been said of Timrod's work in this field: "Passionately fond as he was of Nature, and nourished and refreshed by her always, he never wrote a

line of merely descriptive poetry. Nature is only the symbol, the image, to interpret his spiritual meaning." He believes as strongly as does Wordsworth in a sort of conscious existence in natural objects; note, for example, the opening stanza of *Flower-Life:*

> "I think that, next to your sweet eyes,
> And pleasant books, and starry skies,
> I love the world of flowers;
> Less for their beauty of a day,
> Than for the tender things they say,
> And for a creed I've held alway,
> That they are sentient powers."

The Cotton Boll, *The Lily Confidante*, and *The Rosebuds* are among the most charming of Timrod's poems that give concrete evidence of this belief. Hayne's most striking poems of nature are a number dealing with the pines, which he sang as enthusiastically as Lanier sang the marshes. While flowers and simple things appeal to him at times, he has a constant feeling of devotion to the "majestic pine," the "monarchal pine," the "sacred tree," the "foliaged giants." Every pine has for him a Dryad, an indwelling spirit, which in a beautiful sonnet, *The Axe and the Pine*, he represents as wailing in distress when the tree is hewn down. In *The Dryad of the Pine* he shows that he holds a creed similar to Timrod's in *Flower-Life:*

> "Here lingering long, amid the shadowy gleams,
> Faintly I catch (yet scarce as one that dreams)
> Low words of alien music, softly sung,
> And rhythmic sighs in some sweet unknown tongue.
>
> "And something rare I cannot clasp or see,
> Flits vaguely out from this mysterious tree —
> A viewless glory, an ethereal grace,
> Which make Elysian all the haunted place!"

The poems of Timrod and Hayne have been received as enthusiastically by Northern critics as by Southern. Even their fieriest lyrics of the war aroused no antagonisms, and their songs of Southern flowers, trees, streams, and woods are universally admired. Both men fall short of the genius of Poe, and in both we occasionally catch strains that seem to have been influenced by Tennyson, Keats, and Wordsworth. But they were genuine poets, with a high conception of the poet's mission as prophet and teacher; and they hold a high place in our country's verse — a place we may be sure is permanent, and tending higher every day.

HISTORY WRITING IN AMERICA

Early American Chroniclers. — Not until the second quarter of the nineteenth century was any historical work produced in America which has much merit as literature. The works of Smith, Strachey, Bradford, Winthrop, and Mather have been shown to possess little merit beyond record of contemporary events. Thomas Hutchinson's *History of Massachusetts,* Professor Wendell thinks "may perhaps be called the most respectable American book before the Revolution"; but even Hutchinson was not a man of letters. Besides their value as narratives of a highly important period in our history, these books also deserve to be remembered as evidence of the interest in great movements which produced some really notable historical writers in the period now under consideration.

Four Great Historians. — The four men who may be called the founders of historical study in America — George Bancroft, William Hickling Prescott, John Lothrop Motley, and Francis Parkman — were all natives of Massachusetts and graduates of Harvard. Bancroft spent half a century on his *History of the United States;* Prescott and Parkman

concerned themselves with themes drawn from North America but not coming down to the time of American independence; while Motley produced a history which required residence abroad to secure material, and which is related to American life only through the spirit behind the movement treated in its pages. The breadth of view indicated by this

PARKMAN MEMORIAL, JAMAICA PLAIN, MASS.

choice of subjects is another sign of the Romantic influence already referred to as dominant in England at this time. We have space to discuss in detail only one of the historians, and choose Motley as being on the whole the best entitled to a position in literature, though many would make that claim for Parkman.

JOHN LOTHROP MOTLEY, 1814–1877

Life. — Motley was born in Dorchester, now a part of Boston, April 15, 1814. He prepared for college at Bancroft's school in Northampton, and was graduated from Harvard in 1831. He then studied two years in Germany, where he became an intimate friend of Bismarck. Upon his return to America he took up the study of law, and began to practice in 1837. Four years later he was for a short time Secretary of Legation in St. Petersburg, and later served one term in the Massachusetts legislature. As Motley's friends had not been impressed with any enthusiasm for study displayed by him, they were rather surprised when, in 1851, he took his family to Europe to equip himself for writing a history of Holland. He spent five years in "conscientious research" in Holland, France, and Germany, the result of which was three of the greatest histories produced by America — *The Rise of the Dutch Republic*, *History of the United Netherlands*, and *The Life and Death of John of Barneveld*. A fourth work, planned to cover the Thirty Years' War, he did not live to write. From 1861 to 1865 he was United States Minister to Austria, and for part of 1869 and 1870, to England, whence he was recalled for reasons not yet considered sufficient. The recall and the death of his wife are together believed to have caused his own death. This took place in England, May 29, 1877, and there he was buried.

Authorship. — Motley began his literary career during his law period with two novels, which were failures. Somewhat more successful were some essays published between his government service in Russia and his stay in Europe. But he had become interested in the history of Holland, and was convinced that he must write a book on it, even if it should be a failure like his novels. The attraction of the

subject seems to have lain in his patriotism, in a feeling expressed in the preface to *The Rise of the Dutch Republic:* "The maintenance of the right by the little provinces of Holland and Zealand in the sixteenth, by Holland and England united in the seventeenth, and by the United States of America in the eighteenth centuries, forms but a single chapter in the great volume of human fate; for the so-called revolutions of Holland, England, and America are all links of one chain." And again: "The Dutch Republic originated in the courageous resistance of historical and chartered liberty to foreign despotism." This feeling prevents Motley's being altogether impartial — his Spaniards are too black and his Dutchmen are too white. In this spirit he paints the Dutch leader as the apostle and champion of human rights, and the King of Spain as the uncompromising and bigoted persecutor of the Dutch.

STATUE OF WILLIAM THE SILENT, IN THE HAGUE, HOLLAND.

His favorite motto, *Saevis tranquillus in undis* ("tranquil among fierce waves"), is on the pedestal.

A Striking Portrait. — William of Orange, called the Silent, is the hero of *The Rise of the Dutch Republic.* From the age of eleven, when William succeeded to the principality of Orange and went to the Queen Regent's Court at Brussels to be educated, Motley follows his career with a wealth of detail to the end. As soldier and statesman, his person-

ality dominates the entire three volumes of Motley's great work. Perhaps the explanation of the superiority of *The Rise* to the other parts of the Dutch history lies in the unifying effect of this central figure. As Motley puts it: "The history of the rise of the Netherland Republic has been at the same time the biography of William the Silent."

William's, however, is not the only striking portrait in the work. Philip of Spain, Cardinal Granvelle and the bloody Duke of Alva, Philip's henchmen; Margaret of Parma, the "man-minded offset" of Charles the Fifth, appointed by Philip to be regent of the Netherlands, — these are only a few of the life-size portraits with which Motley's pages are crowded. The writer belongs to the Carlyle school of historians, believing that "universal history is at bottom the history of the great men who worked here."

THE TRANSCENDENTAL MOVEMENT

An Important Meeting. — One of the most important events for literature in America in the nineteenth century was the formation of the so-called "Transcendental Club." It grew out of a meeting of four young Unitarian clergymen[1] after the bicentennial celebration at Harvard in 1836. One member said they called themselves "the club of the like-minded; I suppose because no two of us thought alike." As Cabot says, however, they were "united by a common impatience of routine thinking." Or more specifically, according to Colonel Higginson, the young preachers were displeased with "the narrow tendencies of thought in the churches."

The inspiration of this group of men was the philosophy of Kant, Schelling, Hegel, and other leaders of thought in Germany. Part of it came directly through Edward

[1] "Mr. Emerson, George Ripley, and myself, with one other." — Rev. Dr. F. H. Hedge, quoted by Cabot, *Memoir of Emerson*, I, 244.

Everett, George Ticknor, and some others, who studied in the German universities; but a much larger part came by way of the writings of Carlyle and Coleridge. This philosophy taught, said Ripley, that there is "an order of truths which *transcends* the sphere of the external senses; . . . that the truth of religion does not depend on tradition, nor historical facts, but has an unerring witness in the soul."

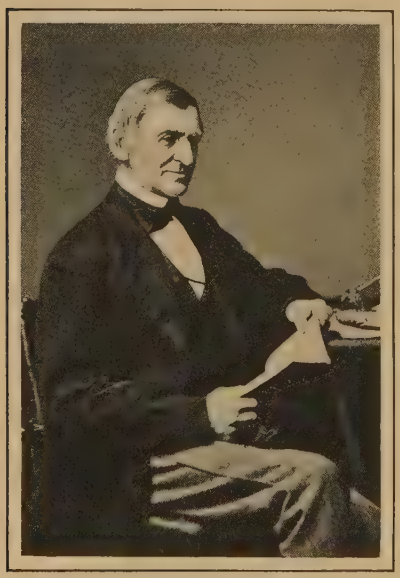
Thus it will be seen that this club, which never had a formal organization, began with religion. Soon, however, it concerned itself with society and literature as well; and within a few years developed into the so-called Transcendental Movement, in which many of the greatest minds in New England enlisted.

The Keynote — Individuality. — As has been said above,[1] it was merely a belated manifestation on Puritan ground of English Romanticism; and the chief feature of both movements was the encouragement of every man to follow the bent of his own genius. This belief in the supreme importance of the individual is repeatedly set forth by the most eminent writer in the movement, Emerson. "Few and mean as my gifts may be," he writes in *Self Reliance*, "I actually am, and do not need for my own assurance or the assurance of my fellows any secondary testimony." In *Experience* he asks: "Shall I preclude my future, by taking a high seat, and kindly adapting my conversation to the shape of heads?" and answers himself: "When I come to that, the doctors shall buy me for a cent." In *Spiritual Laws* the same belief is expressed in impersonal and universal form: "Each man has his own vocation. The talent is the call. There is one direction in which all space is open to him. He has faculties silently inviting him thither to endless exertion."

Men who came together on such a platform were neces-

[1] Page 71.

sarily opposed to each other at many points. Hence, their most remarkable social experiment, Brook Farm, was a failure. The objects of this institute "of Agriculture and Education" were "to insure a more natural union between intellectual and manual labor than now exists; to combine the thinker and the worker, as far as possible, in the same individual; to guarantee the highest mental freedom, by providing all with labor adapted to their tastes and talents, and securing to them the fruits of their industry; and do away with the necessity of menial services by opening the benefits of education and the profits of labor to all; and thus to prepare a society of liberal, intelligent, and cultivated persons, whose relations with each other would permit a more wholesome and simple life than can be led amidst the pressure of our competitive institutions." Brook Farm lasted eight years; and when the land was sold and the mortgages paid, the stockholders received almost nothing for their investment.



RALPH WALDO EMERSON.

A likeness which seems to speak these lines from *The World-Soul:*

"Spring still makes spring in the mind
When sixty years are told."

"**The Dial.**" — With Transcendentalism from the lit-

erary point of view only are we here concerned. It is the only distinct "movement" in American literature. The organ of the group was the *Dial*, a quarterly magazine which was begun the year before Brook Farm was organized, and which "expired after four years of precarious life." The following sentence from the prospectus of the *Dial* will show the intimate connection of the literary aspect of the movement with the social and religious aspects: "The pages of this journal will be filled by contributors who possess little in common but the love of individual freedom and the hope of social progress; who are united by sympathy of spirit, not by agreement in speculation; whose faith is in Divine Providence, rather than in human prescription, whose hearts are more in the future than in the past, and who trust the living soul more than the dead letter." Thus the emancipation of literature is seen to have been one of the chief aims of these innovators. Margaret Fuller, the brilliant woman popularly identified with Hawthorne's Zenobia,[1] edited the *Dial* for two years, and Emerson was a regular contributor. A. B. Alcott, father of Louisa May Alcott, childhood's favorite writer, contributed *Orphic Sayings*, of which Professor Goddard says: "It will surely be no exaggeration to say that these, more than all

THE "ORCHARD" HOUSE, CONCORD.
Home for many years of Amos Bronson Alcott, one of the leading Brook Farmers.

[1] See page 125, above.

the other contributions to the *Dial* combined, served to bring down the ridicule of the community without discrimination on its pages."

In an essay on Thoreau, Lowell remarks that besides the comic aspect, which he sets forth at considerable length, Transcendentalism had "a very solid and serious kernel, full of the most deadly explosiveness." This aspect of it is best known to us in the pages of Emerson, philosopher, moralist, and poet; and Thoreau, the revealer of nature and first practitioner of the simple life. We are now to study the lives and works of these two as the expression of the best that this unorganized movement gave to our national life and letters.

RALPH WALDO EMERSON, 1803–1882

One of the longest, happiest, and most even-tempered of the world's literary lives, and one in which the same sort of unity appears as we have noted in Bryant's life, is that of the great New England philosopher and poet, — Emerson. Like Bryant, Hawthorne, and Longfellow, he came of a long line of New England Puritans, with eight generations of preachers behind him, and twelve other preachers and fifty graduates of Harvard in the family connection.

A Bostonian. — Emerson was born in Boston, May 25, 1803; he died in Concord, "an ideal New England town," twenty miles distant, April 27, 1882; and he spent nearly the whole of the intervening seventy-nine years within the limits of what is now called "Greater Boston." His education was carried on in the grammar schools and the famous Latin School of his native city, continued, as a matter of course, in Harvard, from which he was graduated in 1821. Many of Emerson's school and college friends who became famous have been forced, on being pressed for reminiscences

of their more famous associate, reluctantly to admit that he did not especially distinguish himself, that he made friends slowly, and that he attracted little attention from teachers or students. At his graduation from Harvard, however, he took second prize in English composition, and was chosen

EMERSON'S HOME AT CONCORD.

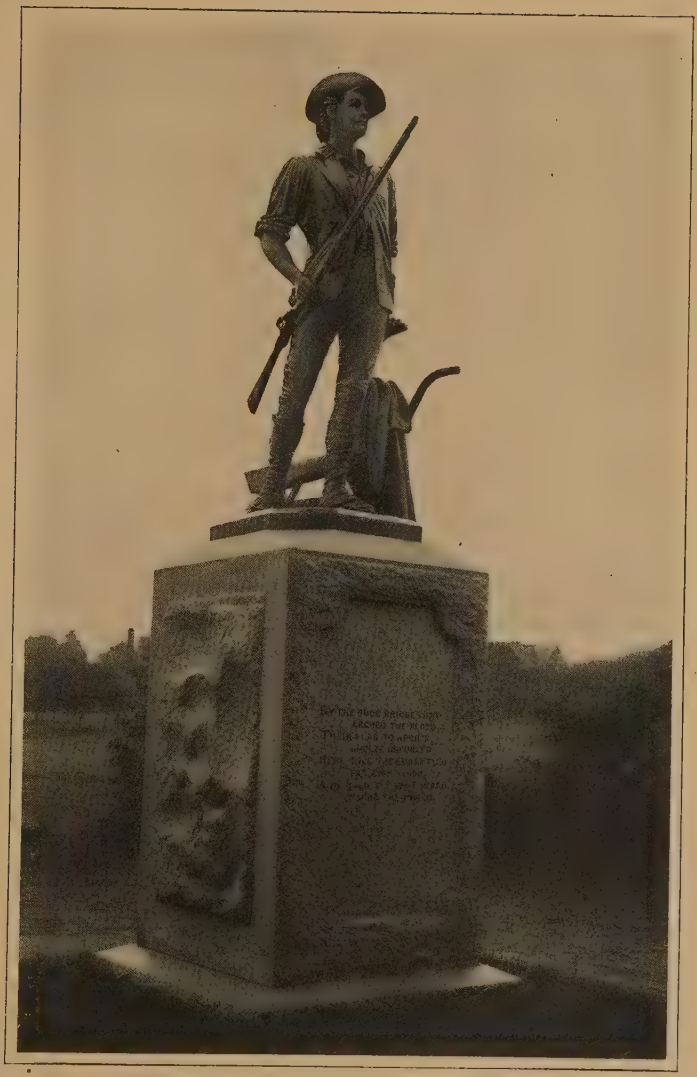
class poet; but the honor of this appointment is somewhat lessened by the fact that seven others had declined it.

Career in the Ministry. — During the years immediately following, Emerson was occupied with teaching and with the study of theology, until, in March, 1829, he was ordained assistant pastor of the Second Church, Boston, of which, on the resignation of the pastor, Emerson assumed sole charge. Some months later he married the daughter of a Boston merchant, Miss Ellen Tucker, an invalid who died in less

than three years. Finding some of the duties of his ministerial position distasteful, and feeling a want of sympathy with the ordinance of the Lord's Supper, he set forth his views in a sermon in September, 1832, and resigned the pastorate. Though Emerson was a preacher to the end of his days, it will be seen that his tenure of a church pulpit was limited to a little over three years.

Friendship with Carlyle. — In 1833 Emerson made his first trip to Europe, of which the most notable experiences were his preaching in Edinburgh, and his meeting with Thomas Carlyle. Upon returning to America he took up his residence in the "Old Manse" of Concord, a house built for Emerson's grandfather, and occupied at the time by Dr. Ezra Ripley, a connection of the family. During the winter of 1833–1834, having determined on a platform career, he began lecturing; but a far more important event of the year was a letter to Carlyle, May 14, 1834. Then was begun one of the most remarkable correspondences of the world, which lasted thirty-eight years. In temperament and attitude toward life, the two philosophers were directly opposed; but each had an admiration and a strong sympathy for the other, and the friendship lasted till death. Emerson rendered a real service to Carlyle in introducing his works to American readers, beginning in 1836 with a preface to *Sartor Resartus*, which was published in this country before appearing as an independent work in England. (It had been printed in an English magazine the preceding year.) Emerson married in September, 1835, Miss Lydia Jackson, whom he described to Carlyle as "an incarnation of Christianity."

First Writings. — The year 1836 marks the entrance of Emerson into literature — as poet, with the *Concord Hymn*, and as philosopher-essayist, with *Nature*, "a reflective prose-poem." Two lines of the former are familiar to all:



MINUTE-MAN MONUMENT AT CONCORD.

"Here once the embattled farmers stood,
And fired the shot heard round the world."

According to Garnett, *Nature* is "the most intense and quintessential" of Emerson's writings. In this he proposes to behold "God and nature face to face," as did "the foregoing generations"; to "interrogate the great apparition that shines so peacefully around us"; to "inquire, to what end is nature?" He then enumerates the uses of nature. That this little book did not meet with an enthusiastic reception is indicated by the fact that twelve years were required to sell five hundred copies. Over against this may be noted that twenty-four years later only two days were required to sell the entire first edition — twenty-five hundred copies — of *Conduct of Life*, evidence of the advance in popularity made by his ideas.

"**The American Scholar.**" — It will be remembered that 1836 is the year in which the Transcendental Club was formed. *Nature* was worthy to be the first forcible expression of the movement, which was further defined the year following in *The American Scholar*, an oration delivered by Emerson before the Phi Beta Kappa Society of Harvard. In this, which Holmes calls "our intellectual Declaration of Independence," Emerson says: "Our long apprenticeship to the learning of other lands draws to a close. . . . We will walk on our own feet; we will work with our own hands; we will speak our own minds. . . . A nation of men will for the first time exist, because each believes himself to be inspired by the Divine Soul which also inspires all men." Here is found the declaration not only of the nation's intellectual independence, but also of the independence of every man, which last has been given as the keynote of the Transcendental movement. Quoting again from the oration, to bring out more clearly its emphatic stand for individualism: "Everything that tends to insulate the individual, —

to surround him with barriers of natural respect, so that each man shall feel the world is his, and man shall treat with man as a sovereign state with a sovereign state, — tends to true union as well as greatness."

Though such radical ideas did in time gain general acceptance, the process was slow; and for the ten years following *Nature* and *The American Scholar*, more hearers, probably, were shocked by Emerson than were stirred to enthusiasm by him. Nothing, however, could turn him from the path he had chosen, and his manner at a certain anti-slavery meeting is typical of his way of receiving criticisms and thrusts of all kinds. At this meeting he was vigorously hissed for some sentiment displeasing to the audience; but Emerson, we are told, "was as serene as moonlight itself — one could think of nothing but dogs baying the moon."

"**Essays, First Series.**" — *Nature* was incomprehensible to most readers — their attitude toward it would have made them thoroughly sympathetic with Lowell's satire on Transcendentalism; and the darkness was not altogether dispelled by Emerson's *Essays, First Series*, in 1841. This collection, it is true, contained the admirably clear *Compensation* and *Self-Reliance;* but it contained also *The Over-Soul*, in which, says Holmes, he "attempted the impossible," because in talking "of the infinite in terms borrowed from the finite" his words become "not symbols, . . . but the shadows of symbols." A single passage will illustrate the difficulty of understanding this essay. "If a man have not found his home in God, his manners, his forms of speech, the turn of his sentences, the build, shall I say, of all his opinions, will involuntarily confess it, let him brave it out how he will. If he have found his centre, the Deity will shine through him, through all the disguises of ignorance, of ungenial temperament, of unfavorable circumstance. The tone of seeking is one, and the tone of having is another."

Other Works. — After an interval of three years (1844) came the *Essays, Second Series*, and after an interval of two years more (1846) the first collection of poems. Emerson's other writings may be listed here without comment: *Representative Men*, 1850, lectures delivered in England, which it is interesting to compare with Carlyle's *Heroes and Hero-Worship ; English Traits*, 1856, which, though by no means over-laudatory, is nevertheless much admired by the English; *The Conduct of Life*, 1860; *May-Day and Other Pieces*, his second collection of poems, 1867; *Society and Solitude*, 1870; and *Letters and Social Aims*, 1876. Very little is gained by reading Emerson's works in chronological order, since for every lecture or essay except *English Traits* he drew freely and almost at random from his journal, or "Thought Book," with the result that consecutive sentences in a published work are often the jottings of ten and twenty years previous. A step further in this style of writing is shown in the essay *Self-Reliance*, which contains material used in four lectures of preceding years — *Individualism, School, Genius*, and *Duty*.

Travels, and Honors. — Emerson made a second trip to England in 1847, renewing the pleasant acquaintances of his first visit, making many new ones, especially with literary men, and delivering the series of lectures referred to above. During the fifties he connected himself with the anti-slavery movement, but was not an abolitionist; advocating, as did Lincoln, the buying of the slaves by the government.[1] In 1872, accompanied by his daughter, he went abroad for the third and last time, traveling as far as Egypt. A few

[1] It is not generally known that as late as February, 1865, Lincoln wished Congress to tender $400,000,000 to the seceded states as reimbursement for their slaves, provided they would lay down arms. A message recommending this action was drafted by Lincoln, but was not sent to Congress because "unanimously disapproved" by the cabinet.

months earlier he had suffered the loss of his home by fire, and a number of friends made him a gift of $12,000 to reimburse him, which he was with difficulty persuaded to accept. During his absence they supervised the rebuilding of the house in its original form; and not the least delightful feature to him of the elaborate reception on his homecoming was the discovery of the restored mansion, with every book in its accustomed place.

In 1874 he was nominated for Lord Rector of the University of Glasgow, and received five hundred votes to the winner's seven hundred. This vote he counted "as quite the fairest laurel that has ever fallen on me." Two addresses of his last years should be mentioned — one at the unveiling of "The Minute-Man" at Concord Bridge, April 19, 1875; and one at the University of Virginia in 1876. Though Emerson was, as we have said, not an abolitionist, he was a stanch antislavery man; and when the war came, he gave voice to strong feeling on the subject, which became actually anti-Southern. Hence when the invitation came to address the literary societies of the Southern institution, he was greatly pleased and felt that he must accept as an aid in the wiping out of sectional feeling.

Mental Breakdown, and Death. — Before the fire of 1872 signs of a mental breakdown in Emerson had appeared, the most manifest of which was loss of memory. His failure was gentle and gradual, and he was continually and lovingly watched by friends and kin who wanted to spare him any possible mortification. This was, however, unnecessary, since, conscious of his weakness, he more and more withdrew himself from society, and, furthermore, did not hesitate to jest about his "naughty memory." A most singular instance occurred at Longfellow's funeral, when, after gazing intently on his friend's face, Emerson remarked to some one near him: "That gentleman was a sweet, beautiful soul, but

I have entirely forgotten his name." This failure of his powers had not been a cause of grief to him, and even his last months were placid and happy in the midst of his loved ones. A little over a month later Emerson himself passed away, as was proper, he had remarked to a friend, "when one's wits begin to fail."

EMERSON'S GRAVE, IN SLEEPY HOLLOW CEMETERY, CONCORD.
Hawthorne and Thoreau are buried near by. (Photograph copyright by Detroit Publishing Company.)

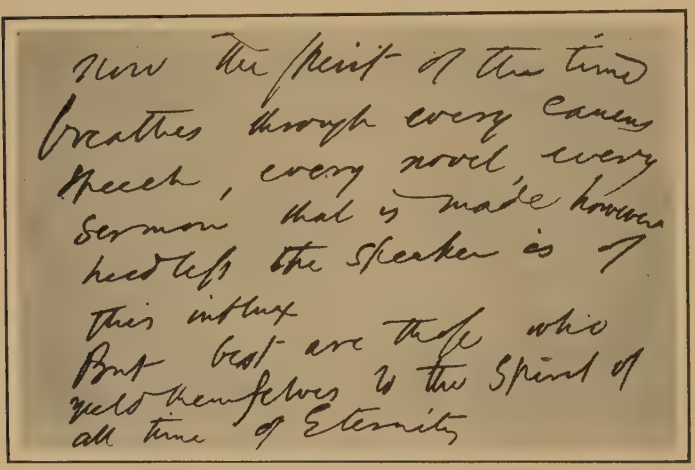
Chief Weakness in Emerson's Work. — As the starting point for our estimate of Emerson, we may well take the turning-point in Matthew Arnold's famous essay. "We have not in Emerson," says Arnold, trying him by the highest, the world's standards, "a great poet, a great writer, a great philosophy-maker. His relation to us is not that of

one of these personages; yet it is a relation of, I think, even superior importance. . . . He is the friend and aider of those who would live in the spirit." The ground upon which Arnold denies Emerson a high place as poet, man of letters, or philosopher is, that Emerson has no sense of, or no care for, structure — a fact easily recognized by the student, and not surprising in view of his method of composition, referred to above. Carlyle saw this defect, not only in whole essays, but in paragraphs. "The sentences are very brief," he wrote to Emerson, "and did not . . . sometimes rightly stick to their foregoers and their followers; the paragraph not as a beaten *ingot*, but as a beautiful square *bag of duck-shot* held together by canvas!" And Emerson himself appreciated it, replying thus to Carlyle in explanation of his writing at all: "I am only a sort of lieutenant here in a deplorable absence of captains, and write the laws ill as thinking it a better homage than universal silence."

Chief Virtue in Emerson's Work. — Both this lack of structure, and the inspirational force alluded to by Arnold in calling Emerson "the friend and aider of those who would live in the spirit," are easily perceived if we stop a moment and question ourselves regarding our knowledge of the essays. What do we recall from *Self-Reliance?* "Trust thyself: every heart vibrates to that iron string." "A foolish consistency is the hobgoblin of little minds." What from *Character?* "Truth is the summit of being: justice is the application of it to affairs." "We have seen many counterfeits, but we are born believers in great men." What from *Politics?* "Ordinarily, our parties are parties of circumstance, and not of principle." "Of all debts, men are least willing to pay the taxes. What a satire is this on government! Everywhere they think they get their money's worth, except for these." A formal outline of any one of the essays is difficult; but their value as

mental and spiritual tonic is, for most readers, beyond question.

If Emerson could not build an essay or even a paragraph, it is idle to expect a philosophical *system* from him; yet the goal of all his teaching is unmistakable. The student might almost express it for himself on the basis of our quotations in the sketch of Transcendentalism. "Individual-


Now the spirit of the time
breathes through every Canons
speech, every novel, every
sermon that is made however
heedless the speaker is of
this influx
But best are those who
yield themselves to the spirit of
all time of Eternity

FACSIMILE OF EMERSON'S MANUSCRIPT.
(Library of Congress)

istic idealism," it has been called; but by whatever name we call it, it is the same guiding star as that which led the English Romanticists — Wordsworth, Keats, Lamb, and the rest — and the greatest intellectually of the Victorian writers — Arnold, Thackeray, George Meredith, Browning.

Emerson's Philosophy. — The main ideas in Emerson's philosophy may be found in almost every one of his essays; in none are they more clearly or more vigorously set forth than in *Self-Reliance.* What is genius? "To be-

lieve your own thought, to believe that what is true for you in your own private heart is true for all men — that is genius." Believing thus, how shall one act? "If you would be a man, speak what you think to-day in words as hard as cannon-balls, and to-morrow speak what to-morrow thinks in hard words again, though it contradict everything you said to-day." When as a result you are charged with inconsistency, remember: "With consistency a great soul has simply nothing to do." And find additional strength in the knowledge that "the highest truth remains unsaid, probably cannot be said; for all that we say is the far-off remembering of the intuition." Do not be misled into gambling with Fortune; external events may lead you to "think good days are preparing for you," but: "Do not believe it. It can never be so. Nothing can bring you peace but yourself."

Though beginning in self and ending in self, Emerson's is not a self-*ish* philosophy, but a self-reliant, self-dependent, self-confident one, based on the belief that within the mind are certain *intuitions* "conceived of as 'above' experience and independent of it." This brief statement of Emerson's main ideas must be received as merely suggestive; for as Professor Wendell well says: "Emerson's work is so individual that you can probably get no true impression of it without reading deeply for yourself."

Emerson's Poetry: Defects. — In view of the great difference in opinion as to what constitutes a *poet* and *poetry*, it is unwise to speak confidently of verse so individual as Emerson's. Much, if not most, of it lacks the qualities essential to great lyric poetry, in which class it must be put. It is, in the first place, not musical, in the ordinary sense. There are numerous false rhymes, such as "flower — bore," "glowed — proud," "solitudes — woods," "feeble — people," "bear — woodpecker." There are frequent needless inver-

sions, as in the opening lines of *The Snow-Storm*, and in the first of these lines from *Threnody:*

> "Step the meek fowls where erst they ranged
> The wintry garden lies unchanged."

Besides the lack of music, there is a lack of emotion in Emerson's verse — it comes from the intellect, not the heart,

EMERSON'S LIBRARY.

and it appeals to the intellect only. Even the *Concord Hymn*, Emerson's most nearly perfect poem, does not move all. A third point to be made against Emerson's poetry is its frequent obscurity, though Poe's supposition that this was intentional, is nothing short of absurd. *Brahma* and *The Sphinx* will doubtless continue puzzles to most readers, even with Emerson's explanation of them.

Emerson's Poetry: Merits. — We are inclined to say that the chief merit of Emerson's poetry is the same as the chief merit of his essays as expressed by Arnold: the poet, like the prose writer, is "the friend and aider of those who would live in the spirit." Both his prose and his verse lend themselves admirably to quotation, and Emerson is probably as well known in single passages as is any American poet.

"All are needed by each one;
Nothing is fair or good alone."
— *Each and All.*

"When Duty whispers low, *Thou must*,
The youth replies, *I can*."
— *Voluntaries.*

"if eyes were made for seeing,
Then Beauty is its own excuse for being."
— *The Rhodora.*

"Spring still makes spring in the mind
When sixty years are told;
Love wakes anew this throbbing heart,
And we are never old."
— *The World-Soul.*

"Nature ever faithful is
To such as trust her faithfulness."
— *Woodnotes.*

The list might be easily extended.

The last quotation above brings us to mention of Emerson's nature poetry, a field in which he ranks with Bryant and the two Southern poets we have considered — Timrod and Hayne. The range of Emerson's observation of nature is wider than that of the others mentioned, and he succeeds in keeping his eye more steadily on the object — in describing the object as it is, without being turned aside to enforce moral lessons or bring in collateral matters. *The Titmouse* and *The Snowstorm*, *The Humble-Bee* and the mountain *Monadnoc*, the rivulet *Musketaquid* and *The Sea-*

shore, indicate his interest in the whole compass of nature's operations, and the poems are faithful portrayals of the beauty he saw in all external objects.

Emerson the Man. — The most delightful impression one gets from Emerson is, however, that of the man himself, who stands out behind and above all his writing. "It's a very striking and curious spectacle," wrote Carlyle in 1872, "to behold a man in these days so confidently cheerful as Emerson." And perennial cheerfulness despite his recognition of the numerous things that are wrong with the world, is his most distinguishing personal characteristic, and the characteristic that drew all to him. "Even the little children knew and loved him," says Holmes, "and babes in arms returned his angelic smile." Even the contemplation of his own approaching end did not disturb this cheerfulness. His *Terminus*, written in 1867, when his mental decay began to make itself felt, is a worthy companion to Tennyson's *Crossing the Bar* in the "serene dignity" with which it looks toward death. We cannot close our sketch of Emerson better than by quoting the last lines of this poem.

> "As the bird trims her to the gale,
> I trim myself to the storm of time,
> I man the rudder, reef the sail,
> Obey the voice at eve obeyed at prime:
> 'Lowly faithful, banish fear,
> Right onward drive unharmed;
> The port, well worth the cruise, is near,
> And every wave is charmed.'"

HENRY DAVID THOREAU, 1817–1862

"I am a mystic, a Transcendentalist, and a natural philosopher to boot," said Thoreau; but this formidable array of titles should not prevent any student of literature, life, and

nature from making his acquaintance. His life is a story of "plain living," and his writings are a record of "high thinking"—a combination always assuring interest. Thoreau has, moreover, grown in popularity as has no other Transcendentalist, an evidence of which is the publication in 1906 of his complete journal just as he left it, making fourteen volumes of over 6000 pages.

A Concord Diarist. — Thoreau was born in Concord, the home of many great men but the birthplace of few, July 12, 1817, of French and Scotch ancestry. Though of a poor family, — his father was a pencil maker, — Henry managed to go through the schools, and with some little help from the University, through Harvard, from which he was graduated in 1837. Among his college themes is one of his sophomore year in which he recommends the keeping of a journal, the form of all his writings. From 1837 to his death he kept a journal, leaving thirty manuscript volumes.

HENRY DAVID THOREAU.

Of whom Hawthorne said: "He is as ugly as sin. . . . But his ugliness is of an honest and agreeable fashion."

Thoreau is usually described as eccentric; and the first conspicuous sign of this in his biography is his refusal to take his diploma at the University — on the ground that it wasn't worth five dollars! It is usually intimated that he was not an especially good student; but when he went to Maine in 1838 seeking a school, he carried with him strong letters of endorsement from Emerson, from Dr. Ripley, pastor of the Concord Church, and from President Quincy, of

the University. It appears that he was certainly distinguished in Greek and in English composition. After teaching a while, he took up his father's trade, pencil making; and when he had made a better pencil, he refused to continue at it, saying that he would not do the same thing twice. He then, according to Emerson, began those "endless walks and miscellaneous studies," which occupied him the remainder of his life. One of these journeys took him the entire length of Cape Cod; another into Maine; still another into Canada. He never showed interest in literary fame, and his reports of these trips were not published until after his death.

In 1843 an effort was made by Alcott and others to establish in Harvard township a community along the general lines of Brook Farm; and Thoreau seems to have been sought as a member. This "Paradise Regained," called "Fruitlands," he visited, but he had no desire to remain. It was a vegetarian community, in which "the 'aspiring' vegetables, those which grow into the air like the fruits, were allowed, but the baser ones, like potatoes and beets, which grow downward, were forbidden," and it expired painlessly in less than a year.

The Simple Life, and "Walden." — Two years after this Thoreau made a social experiment of his own, which is the most familiar episode of his life. He had then become an important factor in Concord life, being in constant demand as lecturer before the Athenæum, and as a skillful surveyor, gardener, and carpenter. But he wished "to transact some private business with the fewest obstacles"; and so, in the year we have now reached (1845) he borrowed an ax from Alcott,[1] and a piece of land on Walden Pond from Emerson, and built himself a hut. Here for a little over two years, with his flute, spyglass, and transit as companions, he lived

[1] See page 161.

the simple life at a total expense of less than seventy dollars, and kept a minute record of his observations "on man, on nature, and on human life."

This record, the book *Walden*, he published in 1854, one of the two books from his pen that appeared during his life. Though much of what it contains — the philosophical portions — might as well have been written in the heart of civilization, the better and greater part of it arose out of his closeness to nature. In the second chapter, *What I Lived For*, he says: "I went to the woods because I wished to live deliberately, to front only the essential facts of life, and see if I could not learn what it had to teach, and not, when I came to die, discover that I had not lived." One thing he believed he had already learned — that the institution of human slavery was morally wrong; and he took extreme ground in opposition to it. An experience of the Walden period shows how strongly he felt on the subject. Going into the village one afternoon he was arrested and jailed, "because I did not pay a tax to, or recognize the authority of, the state which buys and sells men, women, and children, like cattle at the door of its senate house."

The great virtue of the book, however, is to be found not in its meditations on *Solitude* and *Higher Laws*, or in its attacks on slavery and other human institutions, but in its accounts of how "the whippoorwills chanted their vespers for half an hour," of the changing colors of Walden water, and of "seeing the spring come in." It has opened and still opens the eyes of readers to the beauty and grandeur of the great out-of-doors, and has given rise to an illustrious school of nature writers, of whom John Burroughs is perhaps the greatest.

Other Writings. — Before *Walden* Thoreau had published (1849) *A Week on the Concord and Merrimac Rivers*, the record of a trip made with his brother in a boat of their own

construction. The *Week* did not meet a long-felt want, and seven hundred of the thousand copies printed were returned to the writer. This fact was the occasion of Thoreau's humorous remark that he had a library of nine hundred volumes, over seven hundred of which he himself had written. The titles of works published after his death, all compiled from his journals, are: *Excursions*, 1863; *Maine Woods*, 1864; *Cape Cod*, 1865; *A Yankee in Canada*, 1866; *Spring*, 1881; *Summer*, 1884; *Winter*, 1887; *Autumn*, 1892; and *Notes on New England Birds*, 1910. He did publish, however, chiefly through the friendly assistance of Horace Greeley, politician and editor of the New York *Tribune*, a number of articles in magazines, for which he received the paltry remuneration usual at the time.

Death, and Character. — Thoreau continued his outdoor life in all weathers, and is believed to have developed by exposure the consumption that brought about his death, which took place May 6, 1862. All who knew him were strongly attracted to him as a beautiful character, and nothing in his life better justified their attraction than some sentiments expressed in his last weeks, when he knew death was at hand. "When I was a very little boy," he said to one, "I learned that I must die, and I set that down, so, of course, I am not disappointed now." To Alcott he said: "I shall leave the world without a regret," though to few men had "the mere living" been more delightful. To a young friend he wrote: "I *suppose* that I have not many months to live; but, of course, I know nothing about it. I may add, that I am enjoying existence as much as ever, and regret nothing." Emerson tells us that Thoreau never went to church, and in the eyes of many he was an irreligious man; but the sentences just quoted from the last weeks of a long and painful illness show a faith to which not all Christians attain.

Thoreau is often spoken of as an imitator or a mere echo of Emerson, but a greater mistake could hardly be made. Although their theories of life touched at many points, both

THOREAU CAIRN ON THE SHORE OF WALDEN POND.
Every "pilgrim" adds a stone to the pile. (Photograph copyright by Detroit Publishing Company.)

are extremely individual, Thoreau even more so than his predecessor. He represents admirably the unsocial aspect of Transcendentalism, practicing what he preached. "Society is always diseased," he asserts in *Natural History of*

Massachusetts,[1] "and the best is the most so. There is no scent in it so wholesome as that of the pines, nor any fragrance so penetrating and restorative as the life-everlasting in high pastures." Three years we find him in his retreat at Walden, endeavoring to avoid contact with this "diseased" institution. Again, "Hope and the future for me," he says in an essay on *Walking*, "are not in towns and cities, but in the impervious and quaking swamps." Emerson saw as plainly as did Thoreau the imperfections in society, in government, — in fact, in all human institutions; but he never set about improving matters by withdrawing himself from the crowd and committing his protests to the pages of a journal.

Style and the Man. — Thoreau's mode of composition naturally resulted in disconnected, somewhat incoherent writing. Between a brief description of the hyla in March and a brief rhapsody on the joys of early rising in spring, we find the following: "Life is a battle in which you are to show your pluck, and woe be to the coward. Whether passed on a bed of sickness or a tented field, it is ever the same fair play, and admits no foolish distinction." Between a humorous story of an ignoramus's experience with bees and a quiet comment on shadows observed in bubbling water, we read: "A wise man will not go out of his way for information. He might as well go out of nature or commit suicide." And one speculates in vain as to the origin of such a note as this of March 27, 1840: "Think how finite, after all, the known world is. Money coined at Philadelphia is a legal tender over how much of it? You may carry ship-biscuit, beef, and pork quite round to the place you set out from. England sends her felons to the other side for safe-keeping and convenience."

This aimlessness, desultoriness, is not, however, altogether

[1] In the volume *Excursions*.

a defect; it shows us the man himself as no amount of methodical, studied writing with publication in view could show him. Nothing in Thoreau, indeed, seems studied unless it be the disregard of literary fame already referred to; and he believed literature — at least, American literature — to be suffering from too much regard for the public. In the

THOREAU'S HOME IN CONCORD.

volume from which the quotations in this paragraph are drawn[1] he writes: "Look at our literature; what a poor, puny, social thing, seeking sympathy! The author troubles himself about his readers, would fain have one before he dies. He stands too near his printer, he corrects the proofs." Our rejection of such exaggerated statements

[1] *Early Spring in Massachusetts*, made up by bringing together passages from the same days in successive years.

does not prevent our admiring the independent mind behind them.

Although this independence may have been pushed too far, — "almost to a point of anarchy," — Thoreau's service to his own and succeeding generations in America is great enough to justify pardoning even anarchy, especially when it is "of a harmless variety." This service has already been sufficiently indicated. He was the first of a long and illustrious line of presenters and interpreters of every-day nature to the less favored among his fellow-men. Doubtless much of the modern enthusiasm for nature study and the simple life is, as Lowell calls it, "sentimentalism" and "a mark of disease — general liver-complaint." But this is not Thoreau's enthusiasm — it is a perversion of that; nor should he be held responsible for it. What he did was to set forth in a notably pure style the things to be observed in the habits and actions of the woodpecker, chickadee, song sparrow, bluebird, goldfinch, wild duck, red squirrel, hyla, muskrat; and the benefits to be got from a patient, loving, firsthand study of all God's creatures. Of his method of observation Emerson says: "He knew how to sit immovable, a part of the rock he rested on, until the bird, the reptile, the fish which had retired from him, should come back and resume its habits, — nay, moved by curiosity, should come to him and watch him." And of his equipment for this, his life work: "His power of observation seemed to indicate additional senses; he saw as with microscope, heard as with ear-trumpet, and his memory was a photographic register of all he saw and heard."

CHAPTER IV

FROM THE CLOSE OF THE CIVIL WAR TO THE DEATHS OF WHITMAN AND WHITTIER

Introduction. — The literature of 1865–1892[1] is without doubt inferior to that of 1809–1865 — the "golden age." The second half of the century can claim hardly a literary artist to rank with Poe and Hawthorne, or a master of a pure and simple style like Lincoln, or a single poem to be placed beside *Thanatopsis* or *The Raven.* The *average* writer of this period was perhaps superior to the average in the period preceding; but there were a conspicuously smaller number who rose above the average.

It is not uninteresting to observe that, great though it is, the poetry of the Victorian Age in England is also of a lower order than that of its predecessor, the so-called Age of Romanticism. Tennyson, Browning, Arnold, Swinburne, Morris — each had a following among the people as well as among the critics, and the acceptance of Tennyson was well-nigh universal; but they have generally been regarded as inferior to Wordsworth, Coleridge, Byron, Shelley, and Keats. In criticism there are among the Victorians many

[1] The dividing line between Chapters III and IV is obviously arbitrary. Four of the writers already considered lived and wrote for some years after the war; six of the eight treated in the present chapter were known before the war. Nothing, however, written after 1865 by the first group (except Bryant's Homer) added to their reputations. The six of the second group have been assigned to this chapter chiefly, it should be said, because they seem nearer our time.

names that promise to hold a permanently high place; but with the possible exception of Arnold their work does not equal in quality that of Lamb, Hazlitt, DeQuincey, and Coleridge. Only in the field of prose fiction does the later nineteenth century certainly surpass the earlier.

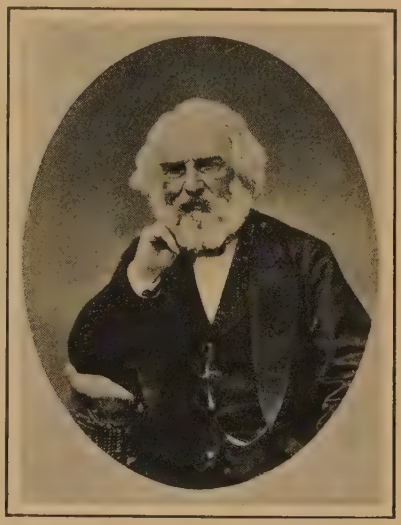
Possibly the same explanations will serve for the decline in both England and America, beginning to show itself, say, in the sixties, and becoming a striking fact in the year 1892, which marked the close of an epoch in both countries. The age was (and still is) intensely *practical*, a characteristic utterly opposed to the imaginative. It is, therefore, a busy age: men and women have no time for writings that require much thought, unless the matter be in some way related to their business. Outside of business the chief interests seem to be politics and sport — neither of which can be expected to inspire literature of a high order. All literatures, moreover, show ebbs and flows in the course of a century or more; and it was but normal that in both England and America the high accomplishment of about three quarters of the nineteenth century should be succeeded by something inferior. The assumption of the inferiority of literature since 1892 is, it should be acknowledged, subject to a qualification mentioned in our concluding section.[1]

HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW, 1807–1882

A Much-Loved Poet. — While few would make the claim that Longfellow is America's greatest poet, fewer still would question his being the best known and best loved. His fame, moreover, and the affection in which he is held by readers, do not stop with the bounds of the United States, but extend to every modern civilized country. His complete works have been translated into ten languages,

[1] Page 261.

and single poems into many others. Of *Evangeline*, an intensely American poem, there are ten versions in German, four in French, three in Swedish, two each in Italian, Spanish, Portuguese, Danish, and Polish, and one each in Dutch and Bohemian. The success of *Hiawatha* is quite as notable, since the subject and treatment are even more local than *Evangeline*.



HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW.

What is the basis of this wide appeal? it is natural to ask. The answer may be given somewhat in the words of the poet himself:

"Ye who believe in affection that hopes, and endures, and is patient,
Ye who believe in the beauty and strength of woman's devotion,
List to the mournful tradition still sung by the pines of the forest;
List to a Tale of Love in Acadie, home of the happy."

Such is the theme of *Evangeline*, — a theme finding an attentive ear in Dane and German, Pole and Spaniard, as well as in American. To whom is *Hiawatha* addressed?

"Ye . . .
Who have faith in God and Nature,
Who believe that in all ages
Every human heart is human,
That in even savage bosoms

There are longings, yearnings, strivings
For the good they comprehend not,
That the feeble hands and helpless,
Groping blindly in the darkness,
Touch God's right hand in that darkness,
And are lifted up and strengthened ; —
Listen to this simple story,
To this song of Hiawatha."

And so with many others. Longfellow was a wonderful story-teller, and all men enjoy good stories; his stories deal with themes which, like those in Bacon's essays, "come home to men's business and bosoms."

One other point lends effectiveness and popularity to Longfellow's poetry. Like Bryant, Milton, Tennyson, and many other poets, he felt himself *called* to write verse — felt himself impelled to it by a power beyond and above himself. In *The Poet and His Songs* he tells us: "As the birds come in the spring, . . . As the stars come at evening, . . . As the rain comes from the cloud, . . . As the grape comes to the vine, —

"So come to the poet his songs,
All hitherward blown
From the misty realm, that belongs
To the vast unknown.

* * * * *

"For voices pursue him by day,
And haunt him by night,
And he listens, and needs must obey,
When the angel says, 'Write!'"

Poe was a greater genius, a greater artist; but with him poetry was "a passion," not a mission, and he utterly rejected the idea that a poet might be a teacher. He will continue to hold a higher place than Longfellow in the realm of art; but he will never make the host of friends

made by the New Englander, nor exert the latter's uplifting influence.

Distinguished Ancestry. — Henry Wadsworth Longfellow was born in Portland, Maine, February 27, 1807, while the state was still a portion of Massachusetts. On his mother's side he was descended from the John Alden and Priscilla Mullins whose romance he celebrated in *Miles Standish;* on his father's, from an old English family of which the first American representative settled in Newbury, Massachusetts, about 1676. The poet's father and great-grandfather were graduates of Harvard, and held various positions of trust in the colony and state; his grandfather was legislator and judge. His maternal grandfather, Peleg Wadsworth, was an eminent general during the Revolution, and represented the Portland district in Congress for fourteen years. If the Wise Man was right in saying that "a good name is rather to be chosen than great riches," Longfellow was truly blessed in his inheritance.

His boyhood appears to have been uneventful, but happy. In the pious, cultured New England household he followed the routine of church and school, with some attention to the arts, and abundant playtime. At the age of fourteen, he passed the examinations for entrance to Bowdoin College, at Brunswick, Maine, of which his father was a trustee; but his first year's work was done at home, perhaps because of his youth, and he entered Bowdoin in the sophomore year. In a rather notable class Longfellow, not a very communicative or "clubbable" fellow, found no bosom friends; but in after years he developed a strong and lasting affection for one who rivaled him as the most distinguished son of Bowdoin — Nathaniel Hawthorne.

Throughout his college course Longfellow was a faithful and capable student, religiously attending required lectures on chemistry and anatomy when he longed for leisure to

read. Determined to "*be eminent* in something," and having "a very strong predilection for literary pursuits," he nevertheless gave to every college exercise the time and energy necessary for success; and he was graduated fourth in a class of thirty-eight, in which, we are told, "there was a large amount of ambition and an intense struggle for rank in scholarship."

BOWDOIN COLLEGE.

About the time of Longfellow's and Hawthorne's student days. From an old print.

Beginning of a Literary Life. — Toward the middle of his second year in college, and eighteen months before his graduation, Longfellow wrote to his father of his wish to be a man of letters rather than a follower of one of the learned professions. In order that he might better fit himself for this occupation he desired to spend a year at Harvard after leaving Bowdoin and before attaching himself to "some literary periodical." To the proposal of literature as a life work his father demurred on the ground that America would not at that time support "merely literary men"; but to the wish for a year at Harvard he gave approval. Other

powers than the student or his father, however, were to have a hand in determining his career. At Commencement, 1825, the trustees of Bowdoin voted to establish a professorship of modern languages, and offered the position to Longfellow, an eighteen-year-old graduate, on condition that he would spend some time in Europe to fit himself for the work. Eagerly he accepted the offer, and sailed for France

THE CRAIGIE HOUSE, CAMBRIDGE.
Which, though it has other interesting associations, is now remembered chiefly as Longfellow's home.

on May 15, 1826, the long delay being caused by the necessity of awaiting a favorable season for the voyage.

The prospective professor spent three years in Europe — one in Italy, and about eight months each in France, Spain, and Germany. French, Spanish, and Italian he mastered, acquiring an excellent speaking knowledge and reading extensively. He also traveled much and went much into

society, having letters from Washington Irving and from Professor Ticknor of Harvard to social and literary leaders everywhere. Of the countries he visited the deepest impression was made by Spain — the romantic, medieval atmosphere of which charmed him greatly. With German he was less successful at this time, though on a subsequent visit he mastered this also, as well as two kindred languages — Dutch and Swedish.

Only two untoward events marred his residence abroad. The first was an illness — fever contracted by remaining in Rome till July, which "completely shattered" him for a time. The second, which occurred shortly after his recovery, was news from America that the Bowdoin trustees had reconsidered their offer, and were willing to make him only a tutor, instead of a professor. This news, he wrote his father, "was very jarring to his feelings"; and he expressed considerable and quite justifiable indignation at their saying that he was too young. He must, he said, decline the minor appointment; and while he hoped not to pain his father by this action, he felt "no kind of anxiety for his future prospects."

When Longfellow reached New York again in August, 1829, he had no definite employment in mind, but a multitude of plans for writing and lecturing. On the first of the following month, however, the trustees reconsidered their reconsideration, and elected him professor of modern languages and librarian! The second position appears to have been given him as an excuse for adding a hundred dollars to his salary. He held the chair at Bowdoin for six years, attaining from the outset great popularity with both faculty and students, and making a great name as a teacher. So little progress had the teaching of modern languages made that he was forced to write his own textbooks in French and Spanish. At the beginning of his third year as profes-

sor, Longfellow married Miss May Potter, a childhood schoolmate in Portland and daughter of a friend and neighbor of his family. The happy union lasted only four years, being broken by Mrs. Longfellow's death in November, 1835.

Professor at Harvard. — So great was Longfellow's success at Bowdoin that, when Ticknor expressed his intention to

LONGFELLOW IN HIS STUDY.

resign the professorship of modern languages at Harvard, President Quincy offered Longfellow the position. The last paragraph of the letter making the offer gave permission to spend a year in Germany, which Longfellow recognized as a request to do so. He accepted, and in April, 1835, sailed a second time for Europe, this time by way of England.

Returning to America in the autumn of 1836, he took up his duties at Harvard in December, and continued to perform them for eighteen years. The letters of his first

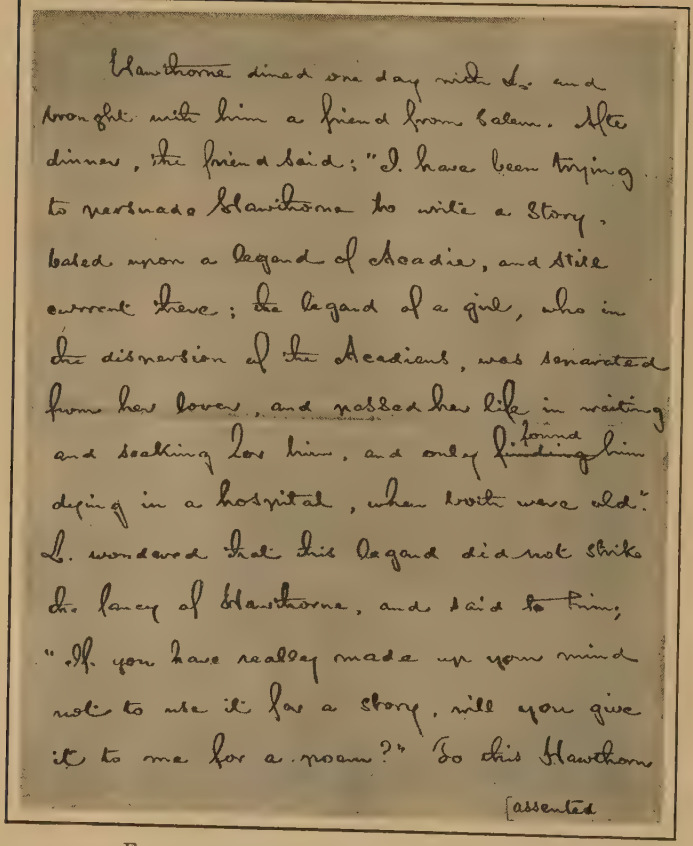
few years at Cambridge complain occasionally of the time required for lecturing, and oftener of the trouble his foreign assistants gave him — "outlandish animals," he calls them. On the whole, however, he realized that he had considerable leisure; and he began to use it in writing poetry. His first volume of verse, *Voices of the Night*, appeared in December, 1839, and met with an immediate and extraordinary success. From this time up to the ninth day before his death (when he wrote the last stanza of *The Bells of San Blas*) his ear was constantly hearing the "Angel" say "Write!" and his heart as constantly prompted him to obey.

After six years' teaching and writing at Harvard, Longfellow's health showed signs of failing; and on the recommendation of his physician he made his third trip to Europe, to try the effect of the sea trip and of the water cure at Marienberg. The events of importance in this six months' vacation were the meeting of the German poet, Freiligrath, and the writing of eight antislavery poems on the voyage home. The acquaintance with Freiligrath ripened into a deep and lasting friendship; and much of Longfellow's popularity in Germany is due to this friend, who translated *Hiawatha* into his native tongue, and in various ways advanced his friend's interest. The poems on slavery seem, when compared with Whittier's and Lowell's, very lukewarm, and the author subsequently suppressed them. There is, however, no doubt of his strong feeling on the subject; his refusal to take a prominent place among the Abolitionists, and his omission of this group of poems from his first collected edition, were due merely to an innate dislike of all controversy.

To most of Longfellow's acquaintances it doubtless appeared that he was leading an ideal existence, with a distinguished position in America's greatest university, a rapidly growing reputation as poet, a beautiful spot to live

in, and a large and devoted circle of friends. But it was not ideal: his life was "too lonely and restless"; he "needed the soothing influences of a home." Thus he wrote to his sister-in-law, Miss Eliza Potter, in May, 1843, with the announcement that he was to be married again. His second wife, Miss Frances Appleton, daughter of a wealthy Boston gentleman, he had met seven years previously in Europe; and it is believed that the resemblance of Mary Ashburton in *Hyperion* (his prose romance) to her is evidence of the strong impression she then made upon him. In the letter to Miss Potter just referred to he said that Miss Appleton possessed "in a high degree those virtues and excellent traits of character which so distinguished" his first wife. She was certainly a comfort and inspiration to him; and no more touching poetic record of devotion can be found than his sonnet, *The Cross of Snow*, written eighteen years after her tragic death.

Teaching Hinders Writing. — Longfellow's work at the University grew harder year by year. He was extremely conscientious; and besides the time required for actual teaching, he gave more time and much thought and energy to the thorough organization of his department, a difficult matter, since there were no models and no traditions connected with collegiate instruction in modern languages. He became wearied of the routine work, and grieved that it left him no strength for poetry. At the end of 1853 he records in his journal that the year has been "absolutely barren" of either poetic or prose production — "there has been nothing but the college work." In the seventeen years since he came to Cambridge he had written two prose works, *Hyperion* and *Kavanagh*, four slender volumes of short poems, and three longer poems — *The Spanish Student*, a drama; *Evangeline;* and *The Golden Legend*, a picture of religious and monastic life in the Middle Ages. The last-



Hawthorne dined one day with L. and brought with him a friend from Salem. After dinner, the friend said: "I have been trying to persuade Hawthorne to write a story, based upon a legend of Acadie, and still current there; the legend of a girl, who in the dispersion of the Acadians, was separated from her lover, and passed her life in waiting and seeking for him, and only finding him dying in a hospital, when both were old." L. wondered that this legend did not strike the fancy of Hawthorne, and said to him, "If you have really made up your mind not to use it for a story, will you give it to me for a poem?" To this Hawthorne [assented

FACSIMILE OF MANUSCRIPT OF LONGFELLOW.
Telling how he came into possession of the story of *Evangeline*.
(Library of Congress.)

mentioned poem appeared in late autumn, 1851; and between this date and December 31, 1853, no other composition came from his pen.

With the "Voices" still pursuing, he decided to give up his professorship, and offered his resignation to take effect in the spring of 1854, or as soon thereafter as possible. The entry in his journal for April 19 of that year reads: "At eleven o'clock, in No. 6 University Hall, I delivered my last lecture, — the last I shall ever deliver here or anywhere." At the beginning of his forty-eighth year, then, the poet found himself at liberty to map out a course of life for himself, unhampered by distasteful routine work. "I am not, however," he writes to Freiligrath, "very sanguine about the results."

The Freed Pen. — As shown by the dates given above, Longfellow had written no poetry during the two years preceding his determination to stop teaching. Within a month after his last lecture he was again writing; in another month he has "hit upon a plan for a poem on the American Indians." Repeated entries in his journal show that *Hiawatha* was much in his mind; and at the end of his first year of freedom he could write to Freiligrath that he had two volumes of poems "ready for the press" — the first flight of *Birds of Passage*, and *Hiawatha*.

From then till his death the Muse never left him for any great length of time. *Miles Standish* was published in 1858; *Tales of a Wayside Inn* in 1863, 1872, and 1874; a translation of Dante in 1870; *New England Tragedies* in 1868; *Christus* in 1872. Besides these major works, the last three of which are hardly more than names to the majority of the poet's admirers, there appeared in various periodicals, and subsequently in collections, a number of his greatest poems. Among the notable short poems of this last period are: *My Lost Youth*, a "memory of Portland"; *The Hang-*

ing of the Crane, "the story of life, the sweet and pathetic poem of the fireside"; *Morituri Salutamus*, written for the fiftieth anniversary of his class at Bowdoin; *Herons of Elmwood*, a "friendly greeting" to Lowell, his successor at Harvard; and a number of sonnets to which critics have given a high rank in that difficult field. Longfellow is the

THE WAYSIDE INN AT SUDBURY, MASS.
Which Longfellow made the scene of his *Tales of a Wayside Inn*.

only American to obtain general recognition in England as a sonnet writer.

The Atlantic Monthly. — A notable event in American letters was the establishment in Boston in 1857 of the *Atlantic Monthly*. Lowell, Holmes, Emerson, were prime movers in the enterprise, and Longfellow, though not "so eager as the rest," was interested, and a contributor. In

1861 occurred the death of his wife, already referred to. Her dress caught fire from a match dropped on the floor, and she was so severely burned that she died next day. The poet, in his efforts to save her, was badly injured also, and was unable to leave his bed to attend the funeral.

Honors of Longfellow's Last Years. — Only one more episode in Longfellow's life need be chronicled. In May, 1868, with a family party of ten, he made his fourth and last trip to Europe — a pleasure trip; and the old and experienced traveler found as much of interest as did the young and inexperienced ones. Besides the sight-seeing, the distinguished poet had to accept overwhelming attentions in London (including requested visits to the Queen and the Prince of Wales), and received honorary degrees from both Oxford and Cambridge. In 1879 a delightful experience came to him — the presentation of an armchair by Cambridge (Massachusetts) children; and the year following he was honored and highly pleased by a celebration of his birthday in the schools of Cincinnati. The rapid passing of his life-long friends, however, — Hawthorne, Charles Sumner, Professors Felton and Agassiz, and others, — caused him much grief; and neither the honors paid him by his own countrymen nor those paid by numerous distinguished foreigners could make him altogether happy. His death occurred in March, 1882, after a short illness. Of the many evidences of the esteem in which Longfellow was held none is more notable than the placing of a bust of him in Westminster Abbey, the cost defrayed by several hundred English admirers. The bust was unveiled less than two years after the poet's death, one of the addresses on the occasion being delivered by his devoted friend and fellow poet, Lowell, then Minister to England.

As was stated at the beginning of this sketch, Longfellow is not the greatest American poet, but he is the

best known and best loved. The poet of the home, the poet of childhood, the poet of American history, the poet of brotherhood, the poet of old-time love, the poet of the elemental emotions — these are some of the designations applied to him and explaining the high place he holds in the people's hearts. There is no reason to suppose that he will ever lose this place. The poems that have at some time appealed to every reader will continue to appeal to succeeding generations, so simple, so true, and so universal are the feelings they touch.

JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL, 1819–1891

What is Lowell? — In much the same situation as Zekle, who

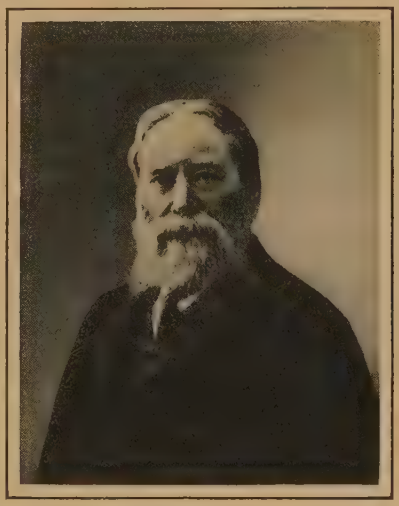
> "stood a spell on one foot fust,
> Then stood a spell on t'other," [1]

the writer finds himself who would adequately characterize James Russell Lowell. Literary critic, political scientist, familiar essayist, poet, teacher, scholar, diplomat, humorist, — in all these fields Lowell made a distinguished name for himself; in the first, he is generally admitted to have attained the highest place in America; and in the last, if not the highest, then only one short of the highest. To the vast majority of readers he is chiefly a poet; to a somewhat smaller number he is the author of *The Vision of Sir Launfal.* To the serious student of our literature, however, Lowell's chief claims to distinction are to be found in such literary essays as *Thoreau* and *Don Quixote*; in such humorous ones as *My Garden Acquaintance* and *On a Certain Condescension in Foreigners*; in the character of Hosea Biglow, probably Lowell's most original performance; and in the lecture,

[1] Lowell's "The Courtin'," in *Biglow Papers, Second Series.*

Democracy, still regarded as an admirable exposition of the American theory of government.

A Lifelong Cambridgian. — Lowell was born in Cambridge, Massachusetts, February 22, 1819; he died there August 12, 1891; and he lived there almost continuously for the first sixty years of his life. Like Emerson, Hawthorne, Longfellow, he was on both sides descended from long lines of illustrious New Englanders. He was the fourth of the family to be graduated from Harvard, but the first to be distinguished by election as class poet. In order to get his poem before his classmates, the author had to print it; for during his last term he indulged in a prank which resulted in his being suspended till after class day. After graduation in arts Lowell took up the study of law, receiving his degree in that subject in 1840. Law was not to him a "calling" — it was a suitable occupation for a man of literary tastes, and of insufficient income to gratify them. The same reason, as we have seen, sent Irving to the law, and Lowell made as great a success as did his predecessor — there is no record of his having a first client. The leisure that came to him while awaiting professional business he used in verse making, an occasional occupation of his college days.



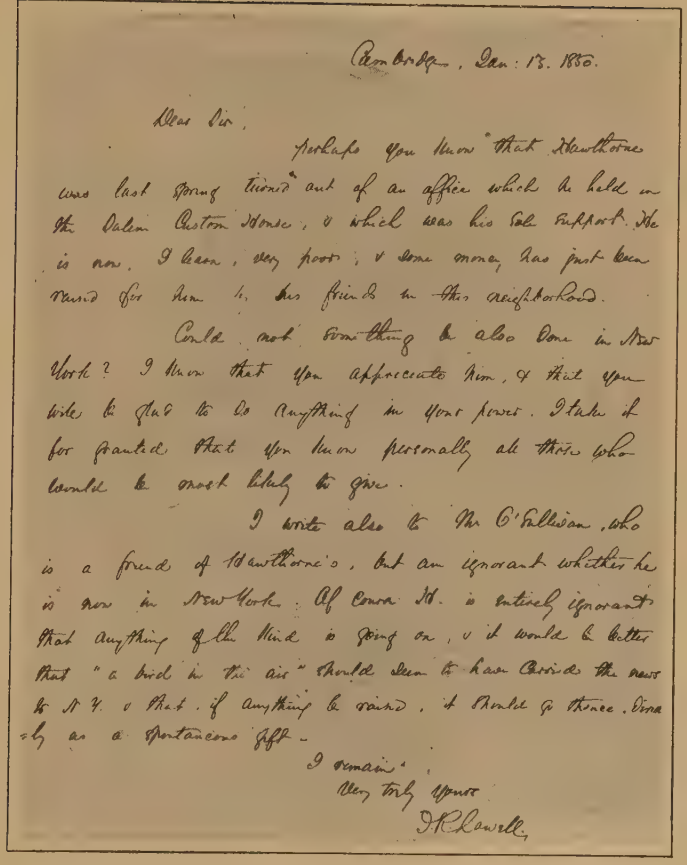
JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL.

First Poems. — Lowell's formal entrance into literature came with the publication, in 1841, of *A Year's Life*, a collection of thirty-five sonnets and thirty-two other poems, many of which had appeared in various newspapers and magazines. Very few of them were subsequently reprinted by the author; and it is probable that most of them would never have been collected at all if they had had to await his inclination. The inspirer of the volume was Maria White, sister of a classmate of the poet. Lowell became acquainted with her late in 1839, and became engaged to her about a year after. "I shall print my volume," he writes to a friend in November, 1840. "Maria wishes me to do it, and that is enough." She was a remarkably strong character; and though she lived before women generally took part in public movements, she was active in the causes of temperance and abolition. *A Year's Life* is hardly more than a series of portraits of her and a record of the growth of the poet's devotion to her; but at least one poem not belonging in these fields is notable — the *Ode*, beginning

"In the old days of awe and keen-eyed wonder."

The high conception of a poet's equipment and mission set forth here will bear comparison with those of Bryant and Longfellow among our own writers, and with those of Tennyson, Browning, and others of Britain's great names.

Lowell married Miss White in December, 1844. He had no assured income and she had no dowry; but they wanted neither of these things — preferred to be "apostles of poverty." During the winter, which was spent in Philadelphia among Quakers and abolitionists, Lowell joined himself to the abolition cause; and he continued active in it until the country was divided, and, after four years of conflict, reunited.



Cambridge, Jan: 13. 1850.

Dear Sir,

Perhaps you know that Hawthorne was last spring turned out of an office which he held in the Salem Custom House, & which was his sole support. He is now, I fear, very poor; & some money has just been raised for him by his friends in this neighborhood.

Could not something be also done in New York? I know that you appreciate him, & that you will be glad to do anything in your power. I take it for granted that you know personally all those who would be most likely to give.

I wrote also to Mr O'Sullivan, who is a friend of Hawthorne's, but am ignorant whether he is now in New York. Of course H. is entirely ignorant that anything of the kind is going on, & it would be better that "a bird in the air" should seem to have carried the news to N. Y. that, if anything be raised, it should go thence. Gratefully as a spontaneous gift.

I remain,
Very truly Yours
J. R. Lowell

FACSIMILE OF A LOWELL LETTER.

Interesting for its contents as well as for the excellent handwriting.

First Great Works. — The following summer found the Lowells back at Elmwood, the family home in Cambridge, where they remained six years. During this period Lowell published *A Fable for Critics*, *The Biglow Papers*, and *The Vision of Sir Launfal*, of which the first two made manifest his strength as critic and humorist, and the last showed not a little power in the higher realms of poetry. The *Fable* is a satire on American authors, giving keen but never biting characterizations of leading writers of the day. Poe is said to be

> "Three-fifths of him genius, and two-fifths sheer fudge."

Of Whittier we read:

> "And his failures arise (though he seems not to know it)
> From the very same cause that has made him a poet, —
> A fervor of mind which knows no separation
> 'Twixt simple excitement and pure inspiration."

He hits off himself quite as readily and as fairly as any other:

> "There's Lowell, who's striving Parnassus to climb
> With a whole bale of *isms* tied together with rhyme."

The Biglow Papers, written in opposition to the Mexican War, which Lowell believed was undertaken solely to aid in the extension of slavery, is a series of poems in Yankee dialect, purporting to be by Hosea Biglow, an uneducated rustic and "a detestable speller." Of the *Vision of Sir Launfal* it is hardly necessary to speak, since it is universally known and admired.

Visit to Europe. — In 1851 the Lowells went to Europe for a holiday, which lasted fifteen months. When Longfellow resigned his chair at Harvard in 1855, Lowell was chosen for the position, and again went to Europe, this time for serious study. On receiving the appointment he wrote to a

friend: "My first thought was a sad one, for the heart that would have beat warmest is still." The still heart was that of Mrs. Lowell, who had died in October, 1853, making the fourth death in his family in six years — three of his four children having preceded their mother. Naturally of a buoyant disposition, Lowell did not brood long over these losses, deeply as he felt them; and his year abroad was most successful, socially as well as scholastically.

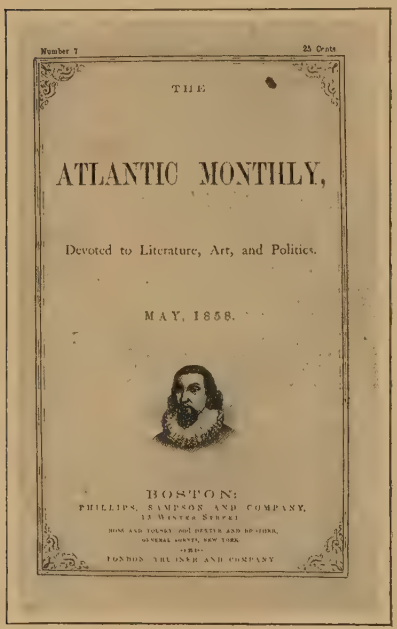
Successor to Longfellow. — Returning to America, he took up his work at Harvard, delivering "two courses of lectures in a year — on pretty much any subject I choose." The subject on which he chose to exert himself most and for which he is chiefly remembered in the University, is Dante. His teaching seems to have been almost ridiculously informal, frequently dealing with "things in general," while he walked up and down before his class "looking at nothing in particular." The key to his attitude toward all literature, and the secret of the inspiration he conveyed to the thoughtful among his students, may be found in his essay on *Don Quixote*, the Spanish masterpiece:

"He reads most wisely who thinks everything into a book that it is capable of holding, and it is the stamp and token of a great book so to incorporate itself with our own being, so to quicken our insight and stimulate our thought, as to make us feel as if we helped to create it while we read. Whatever we can find in a book that aids us in the conduct of life, or to a truer interpretation of it, or to a franker reconcilement with it, we may with a good conscience believe is not there by accident, but that the author meant that we should find it there."

With a single year's intermission, he taught at Harvard for twenty years.

Editorial Work. — Two events of importance in Lowell's life must be recorded for 1857, the second year of his teaching — his marriage with Miss Frances Dunlap, who

had for several years been governess to his little girl, and his selection as first editor-in-chief of the *Atlantic Monthly*. The editorship he held for four years along with his professorship, a combination which was doubtless of value as preparation for future work, but which seems almost to have stopped his writing of poetry. His great success with the *Atlantic* caused him to be invited in 1863 to assume charge of the *North American Review*, to which he had been an occasional contributor. Because of the opportunity it would give him to deal with public questions, he accepted; and because of his unwillingness to undertake again the drudgery of the editorial chair, he stipulated that his friend Charles Eliot Norton should be "active editor." In the *Atlantic* Lowell took a firm stand against slavery; he did not believe the Southern states would secede. When, however, secession became certain, slavery occupied a less prominent place in his thought and writing, and the preservation of the Union became his chief object. During the Reconstruction Period, he advocated through the *North American*


Number 1 25 Cents

THE

ATLANTIC MONTHLY,

Devoted to Literature, Art, and Politics.

MAY, 1858.

BOSTON:
PHILLIPS, SAMPSON AND COMPANY,
13 Winter Street

NEW YORK AND TORONTO: MILLER AND ORTON,
GENERAL AGENTS, NEW YORK.

LONDON: TRUBNER AND COMPANY.

Cover of First Volume of the Atlantic Monthly.
(New York Public Library.)

Review suffrage for the negroes and liberal treatment of the Confederates. The climax of Lowell's writings on slavery and dissension was reached in 1865, in the *Ode for the Harvard Commemoration,* which contains one of the finest tributes to Lincoln, concluding,

"New birth of our new soil, the first American."

In the summer of 1871 Lowell sold enough of Elmwood to give him a comfortable income; and a year later resigned from Harvard and went abroad with Mrs. Lowell for two years. Evidence of his being more widely and favorably known than on his previous trips is found in the more general reception accorded him, in England especially. The seal of English national approval was placed on him by honorary degrees from the two great universities — D. C. L. from Oxford, in 1873, and LL.D. from Cambridge the following year.

Minister to Spain. — The years 1874–1877 were spent in the United States, where he did a little teaching and a little politics. His political activity led to his appointment as Minister to Spain, which he felt bound to accept, though he had already refused to go to Austria or Germany, and had "no desire to go abroad at all." Before sailing he got some amusement out of his fellow townsmen, who acted "as if I had drawn a prize in a lottery and was somebody at last. . . . I dare say I shall enjoy it after I get there, but at present it is altogether a bore to be honorabled at every turn." The difficulties of his position he thus expressed in a letter after he had been four months in Madrid: "Fancy a shy man, without experience, suddenly plumped down among a lot of utter strangers, unable to speak their language (though knowing more of it than almost any of them), and with a secretary wholly ignorant both of Spanish and French." While he was often burdened with the business

of the embassy, and bored with the amount of ceremony in official life, he was thoroughly interested in studying at first hand the national character, with which he was already familiar through a wide knowledge of Spanish literature.

To England. — Though Lowell found some of his duties distasteful, the life in Spain became exceedingly pleasant, and his career there was eminently successful. So satisfactory indeed was he to his government that in January, 1880, after two and a half years in Spain, he was appointed Minister to Great Britain, the highest post in the foreign service. During the five years of his residence in England, he handled with great skill some difficult diplomatic problems, and greatly increased the cordial feeling between the two countries, which had not been without friction since the Civil War. Though he was well received everywhere, and in great demand for all sorts of public appearances, he acted on the assumption that he was asked as the representative of a great nation, and not on personal grounds. Even in country homes, where he was more frequently a guest than any other American who ever lived, he always, says a friend, "let fall some good American seed."

During his official residence in Spain and England Lowell wrote very little, and wrote no poem or literary essay which takes high rank. The essay on *Democracy*, referred to above, belongs to his last year in England; but this is of course not literary. What are very generally considered Lowell's most artistic productions were written two years before his going to Spain — the *Ode at the Concord Centennial*, and *Under the Old Elm*. The first of these, while quite as great as the subject demanded, falls short of the vigor and beauty of Emerson's simple ode of forty years before.

The second, however, the occasion of which was the hundredth anniversary of Washington's taking command of the army, ranks second only to the *Commemoration Ode* among

THE OLD ELM.

Just off the Cambridge Common, under which Washington took command of the troops. (See Lowell's poem.)

American patriotic poems. The author considered it the best of his memorial poems, "mainly because it was composed after my college duties were over." After drawing pictures of Washington and his army — "a motley rout" — and paying suitable homage to Washington, he concludes with a noble tribute to the hero's native state:

> "Virginia gave us this imperial man;
>
> * * * * *
>
> She gave us this unblemished gentleman.
> What shall we give her back but love and praise
> As in the dear old unestranged days
> Before the inevitable wrong began?"

"I took advantage of the occasion," Lowell wrote, "to hold out a hand of kindly reconciliation to Virginia."

Lowell's foreign service came to an end in June, 1885, with the return to power of the Democratic party. "I am on the whole glad to be rid of my official trappings," he wrote to one friend; and to another: "I shall see you again in June — one of the greatest favors I have to thank President Cleveland for." Yet he had a few months earlier expressed his willingness to stay and had admitted his regret at leaving "certain friendships I have formed here, and the climate." His recall was very generally lamented in England, and has been often taken as a text for an attack on the American method of filling such positions.

Last Years. — Shortly before Lowell's departure from England, Mrs. Lowell died. Unwilling to return then to Elmwood, he went to live with his daughter at Southborough, not far from Boston, which was his home for four years. They were busy years; for the poet, diplomat, critic, popular lecturer, essayist, was in great demand. He spoke on matters of national interest before many organizations, gave readings from his poems, wrote a few new poems and published a collection of his old ones, and undertook

various literary commissions. The incentive to work, however, was gone, and he had to beg to be let off from several promises. He was very happy with his large library and his children and grandchildren, and lived a quiet life interrupted only by annual vacations in England, where he re-

"Elmwood."
Lowell's home in Cambridge.

newed the old friendships, and visited the old familiar scenes.

On his return from the last of these trips, in the autumn of 1889, he found the Southborough household transferred to the old home in Cambridge — his only home, he had said, and the place where he hoped to die. During the following

winter he prepared a final edition of his writings; and he was naturally proud of the ten uniform volumes which soon afterward graced his shelves. Plans for other literary work were interrupted by an illness in the spring of 1890; and from that time till his death eighteen months later he was never a well man. His malady caused him great and almost constant pain; but he complained little, and till the very end wrote long letters full of thankfulness and enlivened with jests on his condition. "My handwriting *will* run down hill. I suppose because *I* ám — in spite of continued watchfulness on my part," — this in his last letter to his daughter, written a few weeks before death.

Personality. — Lowell is probably the most attractive personality among our literary men. He made friends readily, and rarely lost one. He was an indefatigable letter writer; and the publication of his letters has very greatly added to his fame — a rare circumstance. In these the most striking feature is the humor, which is present in some degree in nearly every letter. In an early one he says: "I am a kind of twins myself, divided between grave and gay"; and he might truthfully have added that by far the greater part of him was in the "gay" division. Elsewhere he complains that he can't "write anything serious," which the reader need qualify only by a "wholly" before "serious." In his seventy-first year he wrote to a literary friend: "Thank God, I am as young as ever. There is an exhaustless fund of inexperience somewhere about me." Of his fondness for punning, which comes out in almost every letter, the following, written when he was starting for Europe in 1851, is typical. "We are going to travel on our own land. That is, we shall spend at the rate of about ten acres a year, selling our birthrights as we go along for messes of European pottage. Well, Raphael and the rest of them are worth it. My plan is to sit down in Florence — till I have

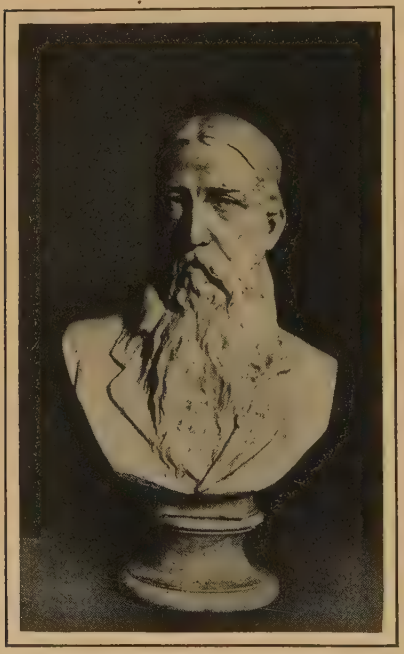
cut my eye(talian) teeth. Tuscany must be a good place for that."

Lowell the Essayist. — Now, charming as this tone is in personal letters and in some kinds of literature, there are places where it seems inappropriate. In a serious essay on Keats, for example — which, by the way, contains some magnificent paragraphs — it is a bit jarring to be held up suddenly by: "A biographer is hardly called upon to show how ill his *biographee* could do anything." (Italics are Lowell's; he probably thought the word was of his own coining.) The reader often resents the intrusion of the humorous in such places — it suggests bad taste. Yet, after thoughtful reading of a number of Lowell's purely literary essays one comes to apply to him a remark he makes in a study of Carlyle: "Real fame depends rather on the sum of an author's powers than on any brilliancy of special parts." The English must have formed their judgment of him on somewhat the same basis; for honors were given him by them that would surely not have been given either to the diplomat or to the mere humorist. During his term as Minister to England he was elected Rector of the University of Saint Andrews, President of the Wordsworth Society, and Professor of English at Oxford.

Discussion has often been indulged in whether Lowell would have done work of a higher grade if he had limited himself to fewer fields. Had he so limited himself, he would have been of less consequence to us, no matter what rank he reached. His breadth, versatility, almost contradictious variety of gifts, made him one of the greatest figures in our national literature and life.

SIDNEY LANIER, 1842–1881

Sidney Lanier's short life was a struggle with adverse circumstances — war, poverty, ill health. What he might have accomplished with such opportunities and environment as Longfellow and Lowell had, can only be conjectured. What he did accomplish shows him to be of heroic mold, a really great soul. Twelve or fifteen poems taking place beside the best in our literature, and many others just falling short of these; a few essays showing thorough and appreciative study of early English writers; a study of the technique of verse, which, though resting on a probably erroneous theory, is admitted to be the best work yet written in the field, — all this he accomplished in a space of somewhat less then ten years,[1] during which he was interrupted by frequent illnesses, and forced to play in an orchestra to support his family.



KEYSER BUST OF LANIER.
In the Johns Hopkins University.

[1] Lanier's literary working life is properly dated from his move to Baltimore in 1873.

A Genuinely American Poet. — Though Lanier's prose has considerable merit, his poetry is of a far higher order, and it is as poet that he seems likely to hold permanently a high place. Many critics have emphasized the distinctly Southern character of his poetry, some going so far as to assert that only in the South could his work have been produced. Certainly by temperament as well as by the accident of birth Lanier is Southern; and his nature poems, upon which much of his fame will rest, give faithful pictures of Southern scenes. His exquisite ballad, however, *The Revenge of Hamish*, showing the penalty for human tyranny over a fellow being; that unique composition, *The Symphony*, setting forth the need of relief from the tyranny of the commercial spirit in American life; and a number of short lyrics on divers themes — such, for example, as *The Stirrup-Cup*, expressing readiness for death whenever it may come: — these all exhibit a man too large to be the spokesman of any section or time. Lanier will be found on examination to be thoroughly American in the broadest sense.

Ancestry, and Early Life. — He was the eldest of three children. On his father's side he was of Huguenot extraction, though the earliest ancestor to be traced was attached to the court of the English Elizabeth. On his mother's side he was Scotch-Irish. The Laniers were settled near Richmond, Virginia, soon after 1700; the branch of the family from which Sidney was descended emigrated to North Carolina and later to Georgia. In the city of Macon, February 3, 1842, the poet was born.

He attended private schools until he reached the age of fourteen, when he entered Oglethorpe College in the sophomore class. The notable facts of his early life are his affection for his brother Clifford, and his musical talent. *Music and Poetry* is the title of a volume of his essays; and to the two arts in the title he may be said to have conse-

crated his life. The musical gift was an inherited one — even when a boy he could play any instrument he tried. His favorite was the violin; but so wearing was it on his sensitive nature that, yielding to his father's request, he gave it up, and devoted himself to the flute. Without instruction he mastered this instrument, and later attained great dis-

OGLETHORPE UNIVERSITY.

Lanier's Alma Mater, which did not survive the war. A new institution bearing this name, and to have a "Lanier Professorship of English Literature," is in course of erection (1915) near Atlanta, Ga.

tinction as first flutist in the Peabody Orchestra of Baltimore.

The War Period. — Immediately on graduation from college with first honors, he received an appointment as tutor, which position he held for nearly a year, resigning to enlist in the Confederate army in April, 1861. He went through the war as a private, declining several offers of promotion because he was unwilling to be separated from his brother. About a year before the war closed, however, the two were

separated by being detailed each as a signal officer on board a blockade runner. While in this service Sidney was captured, and imprisoned for five months. During the war the first signs of consumption appeared; and the poet attributed the development and fatal outcome of the disease to confinement in the wretched prison at Point Lookout, North Carolina. On release from prison in February, 1865, he walked home to Georgia, where, as is not surprising, he immediately went through a severe illness of six weeks. Just as he recovered, his mother died of the dread disease.

"CEDARCROFT."

Bayard Taylor's home near Kennett Square, Pa., where Lanier was frequently a guest.

Wanderings. — Unable even to think of an artistic career while the public mind was in such a distracted state, and when poverty had engulfed the Lanier family as well as thousands of others, he took the first occupation that offered — a clerkship in a Montgomery, Alabama, hotel — and retained it for something more than a year. In May, 1867, we find him in New York arranging for the publication of his *Tiger Lilies*, a novel of the war.

The following September he became principal of a school in Prattsville, Alabama, and three months later married Miss Mary Day, of Macon. This proved to be one of those ideal unions all too rare with geniuses; and from Lanier's devotion to his wife came some charming lyrics, best known of which is *My Springs*.

About a month after marriage Lanier is found again in Macon, in a wretched state of health. For some unknown reason he took up the study of law with his father, and later practiced, remaining in this connection four years. A short trip to New York for treatment was followed by one to San Antonio, Texas, the climate of which he thought might make it a suitable home. Disappointed after a four months' trial, realizing that the end of his life was not far off, he returned to Georgia, determined to make possible the expression of himself in music and verse which he had for so long craved.

Musician and Poet Recognized. — In December, 1873, he began his musical career in the Baltimore orchestra, and fourteen months later published the poem which first attracted widespread attention to his literary gift. This poem, called forth by the sight of a broad Georgia landscape at midsummer, was *Corn*, in the first section of which occurs a description probably never surpassed by Lanier. It begins:

> "To-day the woods are trembling through and through
> With shimmering forms that flash before my view,
> Then melt in green, as day-stars melt in blue."

Among the friendships dating from the publication of *Corn* is that with Bayard Taylor, the distinguished Pennsylvania man of letters, who procured for Lanier appointment to write a cantata for the Philadelphia Centennial of 1876. Taylor and his beautiful home, "Cedarcroft," near Kennett Square, figure largely in the poet's life.

"There, O my Friend, beneath the chestnut bough,
Gazing on thee immerged in modern strife,
I framed a prayer of fervency — that thou,

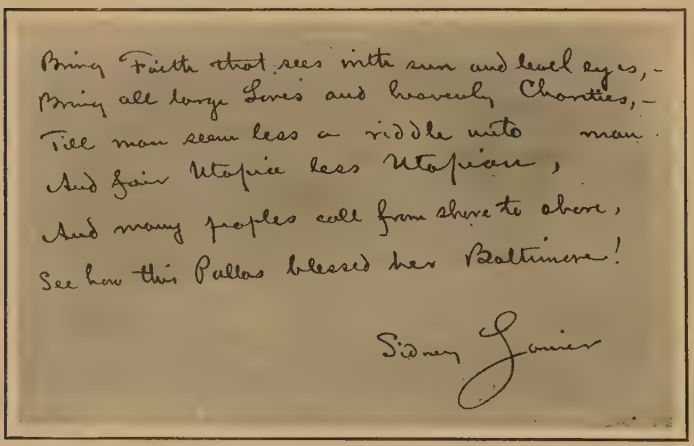
"In soul and stature larger than thy kind,
Still more to this strong Form might'st liken thee,
Till thy whole Self in every fibre find
The tranquil lordship of thy chestnut tree."

The years remaining to Lanier were spent in a vain search for a climate in which he might live without suffering. West Chester and Chadd's Ford, Pennsylvania (both near Philadelphia); Tampa, Florida; the mountains of North Carolina; Brunswick, on the coast of Georgia, — all these he tried without lasting benefit, returning to Baltimore for long periods of orchestra work. Usually his devoted wife, and not infrequently his parents and brother, accompanied him on these fruitless travels, and exerted themselves to lighten both his physical and his mental pain.

Study and Teaching. — One real delight of Lanier's last years was study, particularly of the older English writers, made possible by his nearness to the Peabody Library in Baltimore. He had been, as we have seen, a faithful student in college; and he had hoped to continue his studies abroad. War and disease, however, having destroyed such a hope, he eagerly seized the opportunity now offered. In response to invitation he delivered a series of lectures on Elizabethan poetry to a private class of ladies in the spring of 1878. Following this came a series on Shakespeare in Peabody Institute; and in 1879–1881 he was lecturer on English literature in the Johns Hopkins University. These lectures were published with the titles: *The Science of English Verse*, *The English Novel*, and *Shakspere and his Forerunners*.

The End. — During the second year of his lecturing at the University it was plain that death could not be held off much

longer. We are told that oftentimes the students wondered whether the speaker's breath would last through the hour. Soon after the close of his course Lanier was advised to try, as a last resort, outdoor life in a high altitude. Accordingly,


Bring Faith that sees with sun and level eyes,—
Bring all large Laws and heavenly Charities,—
Till man seem less a riddle unto man.
And fair Utopia less Utopian,
And many peoples call from shore to shore,
See how this Pallas blessed her Baltimore!
Sidney Lanier

FACSIMILE OF CONCLUDING LINES OF LANIER'S *Commemoration Ode.*
For the Johns Hopkins University's fourth anniversary. Lanier changed the first line above to

"Bring Faith that sees with undissembling eyes,"

and the last line to

"*The world has bloomed again, at Baltimore!*"

(MS. reproduced by courtesy of the Trustees of the University.)

in the spring of 1881, accompanied by his wife, he camped in the vicinity of Asheville, North Carolina, where he died in September. Mrs. Lanier's oft-quoted account of this long-expected event must be quoted once more:

"We are left alone with one another. On the last night of the summer comes a change. His love and immortal will hold off the destroyer of our summer one more week, until the forenoon of September 7, and then falls the frost, and that unfaltering will renders its supreme submission to the adored will of God."

A True Artist. — "Whatever turn I have for art," wrote Lanier in May, 1873, "is purely musical; poetry being with me a mere tangent into which I shoot sometimes." This may have been true at the time it was written; but before long a change came. Six months later he wrote to Mrs. Lanier as one reason for accepting the position in the orchestra: "It will give me a foothold, which I can likely step from to something better, — for the Peabody is a literary as well as a musical institution." It has been implied above that the two arts shared almost equally his devotion. While, however, he wrote for the flute some compositions which attracted attention, he lacked in music the *creative* power which he possessed in literature.

His musical talent, nevertheless, contributed much to his poetic success. In that field of poetry called the "onomatopoetic" Lanier takes a high place, with a number of poems in which sound and movement have helped much to bring out and enforce the meaning. Of this class the best known is the *Song of the Chattahoochee*, with its haunting "hills of Habersham" and "valleys of Hall." More wonderful than any other poem of this class, however, is *The Symphony*, which by many is considered the author's masterpiece.

"The Symphony." — In this poem, says Lanier, "I personify each instrument in the orchestra, and make them discuss various deep social questions of the times, in the progress of the music. It is now nearly finished; and I shall be rejoiced thereat, for it verily racks all the bones of my spirit." The theme of the poem is given in the first two lines:

> "O Trade! O Trade! would thou wert dead!
> The time needs heart — 'tis tired of head."

That is, the time needs love to take the place of the avaricious spirit of commercial life. These opening lines begin

the outcry of the violins, which speak for the poor. Next comes (felicitous combination) the flute, speaking for the voices of nature, her "utmost depths and heights." Then follow the clarinet, representing the Lady who longs for the

Library at Cedarcroft.

restoration of love as the only ground for marriage; the horn, representing the knight of the days of chivalry, who believes that the Lady's wish will be granted; the hautboy, calling for the simplicity and purity of childhood. The harmony is completed by the "ancient, wise bassoons," and we hear the voices together sing that only love can "solve the discords true."

Lanier the man, Lanier the musician, Lanier the poet — the three are almost equally inspiring studies; and they can scarcely be studied separately. The concluding lines of

his *Life and Song* express an ideal which he himself closely approached, if he did not actually reach:

> "His song was only living aloud,
> His work, a singing with his hand!"

HENRY WOODFIN GRADY, 1850–1889

A Tragically Short Life. — The lives of three Southern writers treated in these pages were tragic in their shortness. Lanier's had another element of tragedy — the long struggle with incurable disease; Poe's had several other elements — a temperamental unfitness to look out for himself, an extreme sensitiveness to criticism, a weakness for drink. The life of the writer whom we are now to study was tragic only in its early ending. On the day of Grady's death, in an address before the New England Society of New York, Chauncey M. Depew said: "His death in the meridian of his powers and the hopefulness of his mission, at the critical period of the removal forever of all misunderstandings and differences between all sections of the republic, is a national calamity." Three years earlier, at the annual meeting of the same

HENRY WOODFIN GRADY.
"Journalist, Orator, Patriot."

society, Grady had delivered a noteworthy address on *The New South*. His life, indeed, was devoted to the upbuilding of his native section, and to the interpretation of it to the North. The new South, said he, "is enamored of her work. Her soul is stirred with the breath of a new life." But "she believes that the late struggle . . . was war and not rebellion; . . . and that her convictions were as honest as yours. . . . The South has nothing to take back."

Henry Woodfin Grady was born in Athens, Georgia, May 24, 1850.[1] His father, William Grady, was an Irishman who settled in North Carolina, made money, moved to Georgia, and married a Georgia woman of good family and strong character, Miss Ann E. Gartrell. Henry was not a hard student either at school or college; but he read extensively always, and as a boy took great interest in athletics. When he was ten years old the war came. William Grady entered as captain of cavalry, was promoted to a colonelcy, and was killed at Petersburg in 1864. The story of his widow's successful effort to raise three children in the troubled days of Reconstruction is that of thousands of Southern homes.

Journalistic Career. — Grady was graduated from the University of Georgia in 1868, and from the University of Virginia two years later. Before leaving the Virginia institution he was distinguished as an orator, and by a clever letter to an Atlanta paper had discovered his calling — journalism. For ten years he had a checkered career. From the university he went to Atlanta, but after a few months moved to Rome, Georgia, as editor of the *Courier*. A disagreement with the proprietor led to Grady's purchasing and combining the city's other two papers, the *Daily* and

[1] The author has found no less than six different dates in print for Grady's birth. That given above is taken from the monument in Atlanta.

the *Commercial*. He was very irregular in his editorial labors, and the paper failed. Returning to Atlanta, Grady and two associates founded the *Herald*. Too vigorous business rivalry brought about the failure of this paper also, whereupon Grady became correspondent of the New York *Herald*, and soon began to contribute regularly to the Atlanta *Constitution*. In 1880 he purchased a large interest in the last-named paper, became its managing editor, and for the remainder of his life devoted himself to improving the paper and extending its usefulness. He died December 23, 1889, of pneumonia, developed from a cold contracted while speaking in Boston.

GRADY MONUMENT, ATLANTA.

Unveiled October 21, 1891. The cost (over $20,000) was contributed from all parts of the country.

Oratorical Career. — Grady's complete "works" consist of eight orations delivered in the last three years of his life before varied audiences from Dallas, Texas, to Boston. Of these one is concerned with prohibition, one with a problem of government, one with a national economic problem; the remaining five with distinctively Southern problems. Before the literary societies of his Alma Mater he spoke of his life as "busy beyond its capacities." Had the case been different, or had that busy life

been spared longer, we should have a larger amount of writing as a basis for placing him in a history of our literature.

His style is what is generally called "highly colored," which means marked by an overabundance of figurative, imaginative language. Its most striking quality, however, is the native wit, which always flows freely and which contributes much to the effectiveness of the orator's efforts. So impressed, however, was the speaker with the matter of his addresses, and so impressive did he make it to his audiences that they gave little thought to the manner of them. He found it difficult, he said, addressing the Boston Merchants' Association, to "discuss the problem of the races in the home of [Wendell] Phillips and [Charles] Sumner. But," he continued, "if a purpose to speak in perfect frankness and sincerity; if earnest understanding of the vast interests involved; if a consecrating sense of what disaster may follow further misunderstanding and estrangement, if these may be counted to steady undisciplined speech and to strengthen an untried arm — then, sir, I find the courage to proceed." It was by this attitude and tone that, according to Depew, Grady "commanded the attention of the country and won universal fame."

A Union veteran's widow, after reading Grady's speeches on Southern problems, remarked with feeling that the taking away of such a character in his prime was a dispensation of Providence hard to understand. Henry Watterson, the distinguished editor and publicist, had no such difficulty. In an oration on Grady, he said: "Short as his life was, its heaven-born mission was fulfilled; the dream of his childhood was realized; for he had been appointed by God to carry a message of peace on earth, good-will to men, and, this done, he vanished from the sight of mortal eyes, even as the dove from the ark."

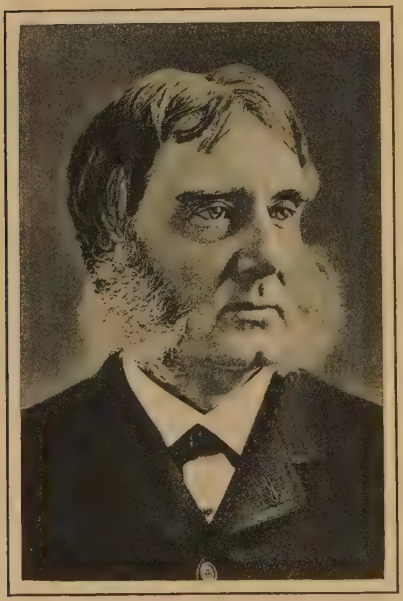
GEORGE WILLIAM CURTIS, 1824–1892

An Influential Figure. — The importance of George William Curtis in our literature is due rather to his influence than to his visible accomplishment. That influence, moreover, was exerted by deliberate choice in the field of morals much more than in the field of pure literature. Literature as an end in itself was nothing to him. His strength was in appreciation rather than in creation or in scientific criticism; and he appreciated nothing that did not in some way contribute to the upbuilding of humanity. From his first "Easy Chair" essays in *Harper's Magazine* in 1853 to his death thirty-nine years later the wish nearest his heart was the betterment of his country; and the slight present-day interest in his writings is largely due to his having concerned himself with current needs. More than one eminent critic of to-day, however, ranks Curtis's essays only a little below Lowell's.

George William Curtis was born in Providence, Rhode Island, February 24, 1824. The first American Curtis arrived in 1635, and settled in Watertown, Massachusetts; and the family continued in that vicinity till George William's father moved to the adjoining state. His mother died when he was only two years old; but his father's second wife, who came into the home nine years afterward, was as devoted to him as a mother could be. A strong influence upon the boy, which continued till he was well on into manhood, was that of his elder brother Burrill. The two attended school at Jamaica Plain (then a suburb of Boston) and at Providence until George was fifteen years old; following which, upon his father's removal to New York City, came three years of private tutors. Then, instead of going to college, the two boys became "boarders and boarders only" at Brook Farm, the socialistic com-

munity spoken of above.[1] Here they came in contact with the great minds of that establishment, and must have been influenced by it, though Curtis's biographer, Edward Cary, is inclined to think this influence usually overestimated.

Interest in Public Affairs. — His letters from New England to his father furnish striking evidence of his early interest in public affairs, of his firm stand for a higher citizenship, and of his foresight. He foresaw — and this was in 1845, when he was barely twenty-one — that the nation would be divided by the slavery question; though sixteen years later, Lincoln, at the age of fifty-two, believed disunion could be prevented. In one letter he expresses to his protectionist father strong disapproval of a protective tariff, but on grounds very different from those on which disapproval to-day is based. "I have no right to protect American labor at the expense of foreign. . . . I see no necessity that American manufacturers should flourish if they cannot do so without thrusting our neighbor out of the market."



George William Curtis.

The winter of 1845–1846 Curtis spent at his home in New

[1] See page 160.

York, and in the August following sailed for Europe, expecting to travel two years. He was gone four years instead, spending about a year each in Italy, Germany, France, and Egypt and Palestine. Throughout the trip he was what we should call "special correspondent" of New York papers, recording regularly his impressions of great men and movements.

Curtis the Author. — In the spring of 1851, a few months after his return from Europe, Curtis published *Nile Notes of a Howadji.* ("Howadji" is Arabic for "traveler.") This book, composed of transcripts from his Egyptian diary, marks the author's entrance into the field of literature. The following year appeared *Howadji in Syria,* which utilized, as its title implies, more of his notes of travel. The other books published by him are: *Lotus-Eating,* 1852, letters reporting a tour of New York and New England; *Potiphar Papers,* 1853, satires on New York society; *Prue and I,* 1857, a series of sketches of an obscure couple; and *Trumps,* 1861, a novel that failed utterly. The four last named had previously appeared in New York papers and magazines.

The Politician. — Curtis's literary career was short, and his political career was begun before the other was ended. From the position of "utility man" on the staff of the New York *Tribune* he passed to editorial work for the Harpers, in whose *Magazine* in 1853 he originated the department still known as "The Easy Chair." Two years later, before the students of Wesleyan University, Middletown, Connecticut, Curtis made his first political address, on *The Duty of the American Scholar to Politics and the Times,* concluding with an appeal to his hearers to oppose the planting of slavery in Kansas. In the autumn of this year (1856) a new party, called the Republican, and made up of the anti-slavery elements of all the old parties, confronted the

Democrats. As was natural, Curtis joined heartily this new party, and labored throughout the campaign for its candidate, John C. Fremont. The end of this year was important in Curtis's career for his marriage to Miss Anna Shaw, daughter of Francis G. Shaw, of Staten Island. Her family were strong abolitionists; and the connection was an incentive to him to continue the fight begun under Fremont. Mrs. Curtis was a woman of high ideals, and was always an inspiration to him. From the campaign of 1856 till the surrender at Appomattox, Curtis's pen and voice were exerted in behalf of emancipation, the success of which he never doubted.

In the spring of 1857 the publishers of *Putnam's Monthly*, in which Curtis was interested on the business side as well as on the editorial, failed. Though he was not legally responsible for a cent of the firm's indebtedness, he felt morally responsible for the whole, and undertook to pay it off. This required eighteen years, and the accumulation of a fortune that he would not have thought of accumulating for himself. His income from writing he added to by entering the lyceum field, where he became immensely popular, sharing first place with Emerson and Henry Ward Beecher.

In the same year as the *Putnam's* failure Curtis began to write for *Harper's Weekly*, of which six years later he became editor-in-chief. In the conduct of the *Weekly* he had absolute freedom, which he used to advance four chief causes — abolition, woman suffrage, civil service reform, and independence in politics. In 1871 he saw the first sign of success of his civil service labors, when a commission was appointed to recommend changes in the requirements for admission to the public service. Curtis was made chairman; and the commission worked out a system which in substance became law twelve years after. To his labors more than to any other influence is civil service reform due.

From its formation in 1856 he was a prominent figure in the Republican party for thirty years. He was a delegate to the national conventions of 1860, 1864, 1876, and 1884; to the New York state constitutional convention of 1866; was presidential elector in 1868; nominated for Secretary of State in New York in 1869; and received from President Hayes in 1876 offer of any foreign mission he might choose. The two honors last named he declined.

His Political Philosophy. — Curtis, like Lowell, went to the convention of 1876 chiefly to oppose the nomination of James G. Blaine for president; and there is no doubt that, had Blaine been nominated, he would not have been supported by *Harper's Weekly* and its editor. About a year after this convention Curtis delivered his best-known address, *The Public Duty of Educated Men;* and in it he took a vigorous stand for independence in politics. As was the case with his first notable oration this was delivered to college men — the graduating class at Union College. "A practical and active interest in politics," said he, "will lead you to party association and coöperation. . . . But in this tendency, useful in the state as the fire upon the household hearth, lurks, as in that fire, the deadliest peril. . . . Our safety lies alone in cool self-possession. . . . The first object of concerted political action is the highest welfare of the country. . . . Perfect party discipline is the most dangerous weapon of party spirit, for it is the abdication of the individual judgment." This oration summarizes his political philosophy; and it was this philosophy that directed his whole life.

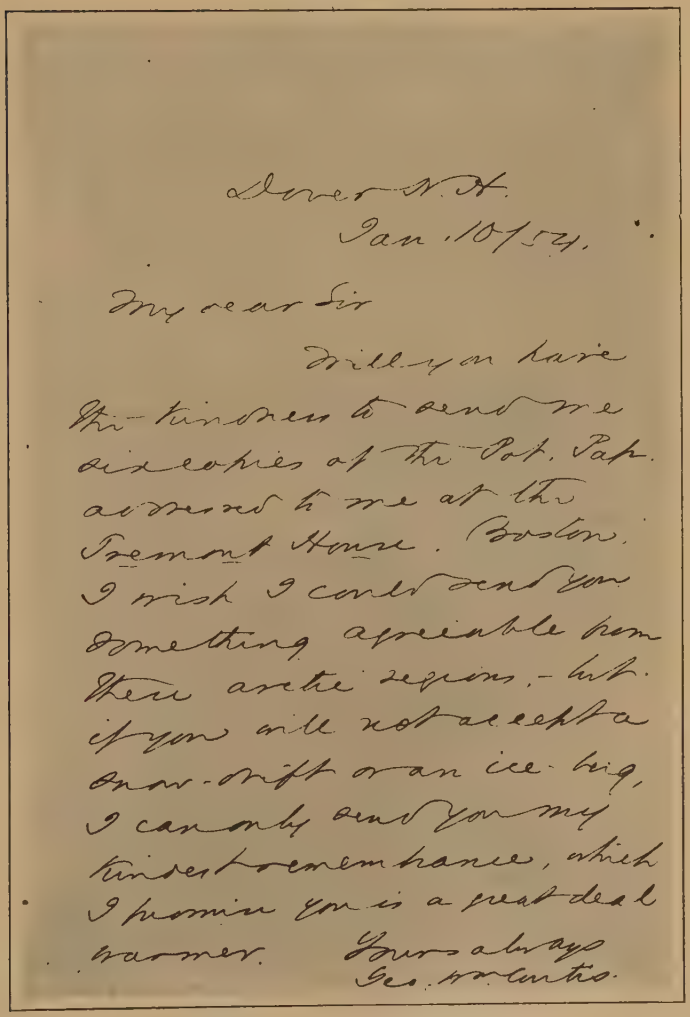
Curtis was in constant demand as orator for all sorts of special occasions, and seldom failed to respond. Of his addresses on purely literary subjects the memorials on Bryant (1878) and Lowell (1892) are the most notable. Though not a college graduate he received seven honorary degrees from five institutions — Brown, Colgate, Rochester,

Harvard, and Columbia; and two years before his death was elected Chancellor of the University of New York. His last public appearance was a second delivery of the Lowell eulogy. In a few weeks he became ill; and after three months of great pain he died August 31, 1892.

Literary Style. — "I should not find it easy," says Howells[1] of Curtis, "to speak of him as a man of letters only, for . . . he turned from the fairest career in literature to tread the thorny path of politics because he believed that duty led the way, and that good citizens were needed more than good romancers." To this it may be added that his influence as a citizen was in large measure due to power gained through his training in literature. All his orations, indeed, show the care in expression that is found in the works of great orators. His books show, too, the oratorical style, with its "splendid architecture," "wealth of ornamentation," "gorgeous colors" — phrases used by Carl Schurz in an appreciative essay on *The Friend of the Republic.* These qualities, though in cold type they do not well stand scrutiny, are just such as carry weight in orations and addresses delivered by a powerful and charming personality.

Prue and I is the author's one memorable contribution to pure literature. It records the thoughts and experiences of an old bookkeeper and his wife, who live a monotonous life in the city and are contented to live so. Prue is a rather matter-of-fact home-body, while "I" is rather imaginative; and the variations from the daily routine come from the old man's visits to his "castles in Spain," and from his trips in the "Flying Dutchman" and other mysterious conveyances. "From the windows of those castles look the beautiful women whom I have never seen, whose portraits the poets

[1] In *Literary Friends and Acquaintance.*



Dover N. H.
Jan. 10/54.

My dear Sir

Will you have the kindness to send me directories of the Pat. Pap. addressed to me at the Fremont House, Boston. I wish I could send you something agreeable from these arctic regions. - but if you will not accept a snow-drift or an ice-berg, I can only send you my kindest remembrance, which I promise you is a great deal warmer. Yours always Geo. W. Curtis.

FACSIMILE OF A LETTER OF CURTIS.
(New York Public Library.)

have painted. They wait for me there, and chiefly the fair-haired child, lost to my eyes so long ago, now bloomed into an impossible beauty. The lights that never shone glance at evening in the vaulted halls upon banquets that never were spread. The bands I have never collected play all night long, and enchant into silence the brilliant company that was never assembled. In the long summer mornings the children that I never had play in the gardens that I never planted." "If the chances of life have moored me fast to a bookkeeper's desk, they have left all the lands I longed to see fairer and fresher in my mind than they could ever be in my memory." A quite uninspired philosophy, one will say; yet is it surely better than the pessimistic and discontented philosophy which darkens and embitters the lives of so many average men. Says Prue's husband: "I keep books by day, but by night books keep me. They leave me to dreams and reveries" — such reveries as make for a beautiful inner life even in sordid surroundings. *Prue and I* is one of that small and select number of books that grow better with every re-reading, and come in time to be old friends.

JOHN GREENLEAF WHITTIER, 1807–1892

When Lowell, in 1857, accepted *Skipper Ireson's Ride* for publication in the *Atlantic*, he wrote to the author: "I shall not let you rest till I have got a New England pastoral out of you." Whittier was then in his fiftieth year, an age at which a man may be supposed to have done all the *kinds* of work of which he is capable; and Whittier had then written no New England pastoral. Lowell, however, was keen enough to see that the best of Whittier the poet was not to be found in *Massachusetts to Virginia*, *The Christian Slave*, or even in *Ichabod;* but rather in *The Merrimac*, *Hampton*

Beach, and *The Huskers*. A thoughtful reading of these six poems will convince any reader that the first three belong to the "episodical" class, while the last three are closely associated with "the real object and aim" of the poet's life, and give promise of the pastoral Lowell had set his heart on. *Snow-Bound*, the answer to the *Atlantic* editor, was too long for use in the magazine; but in its pages many shorter idyls from the same source appeared for the first time.

JOHN GREENLEAF WHITTIER.
"The Quaker Laureate of Puritanism."
(W. C. Lawton.)

Besides the episodical poems written in behalf of abolition, and the poems of New England life, another group of Whittier's poems are notable — the religious poems. The devout Quaker gave frequent voice to the things of the spirit, and struck a responsive chord in the hearts of multitudes. Whittier is well represented in the hymn books of every Christian denomination, though he was himself ignorant of music, and agreed with his sect in its objection to music in religious services.

A Quaker Farmer. — John Greenleaf Whittier was born December 17, 1807, near Haverhill, Massachusetts, some thirty miles from Boston. Almost his entire life of eighty-five years was spent within a limited territory around his

birthplace, though he traveled a great deal "by proxy," as he wrote to Bayard Taylor. Whittier came of substantial, but not illustrious, stock on both sides. Most of his ancestors were dissenters, and many of them were Quakers, including the poet's father and mother, to whose faith he adhered through life. The home in which he grew up was that of a poor farmer, and Whittier, like the other members

WHITTIER'S BIRTHPLACE, NEAR HAVERHILL, MASS.

of the family, had a share of the work assigned to him. The life of this household, including a sketch of every one belonging to it, is immortalized in the ever popular pastoral idyl, *Snow-Bound*.

Education and Home Reading. — Unlike the other New England poets, Whittier did not receive a college education, nor did his home contain much of a library for him to "tumble about" in. The opportunities afforded by the district school were supplemented by two half-years in the

Haverhill Academy. As the poet's father was unable to pay any portion of the Academy expenses, Whittier made money for the first term by a winter of shoemaking. A brief experience of teaching provided funds to begin his second term, which a little bookkeeping for a town merchant enabled him to complete. The home library of twenty-five or thirty volumes consisted of the Bible and the lives and journals of Penn, Fox, and other famous Quakers. The only other books which seem to have come in Whittier's way are Burns, lent him by the schoolmaster; Shakespeare, bought secretly on a trip to Boston; and a Waverley novel, title unknown, as is its source. Burns was a revelation to the man who became the unrivaled interpreter of New England common life; and Whittier's first reading of the Scotch poet aroused an enthusiasm that lasted through life.

That this poor farmer's son had even the one year at Haverhill Academy was due to a force outside the family. Some verses called *The Exile's Departure*, written in 1825, were sent by his sister the next year to William Lloyd Garrison, then editor of a weekly paper in a near-by town. Not only were the verses published: the editor sought the youthful author, and urged upon the family the necessity of giving him a better education. This was the beginning of the lifelong friendship of the two reformers — one the

> "Champion of those who groan beneath
> Oppression's iron hand";

the other a man who stood

> "For reform and whatever they call human rights."

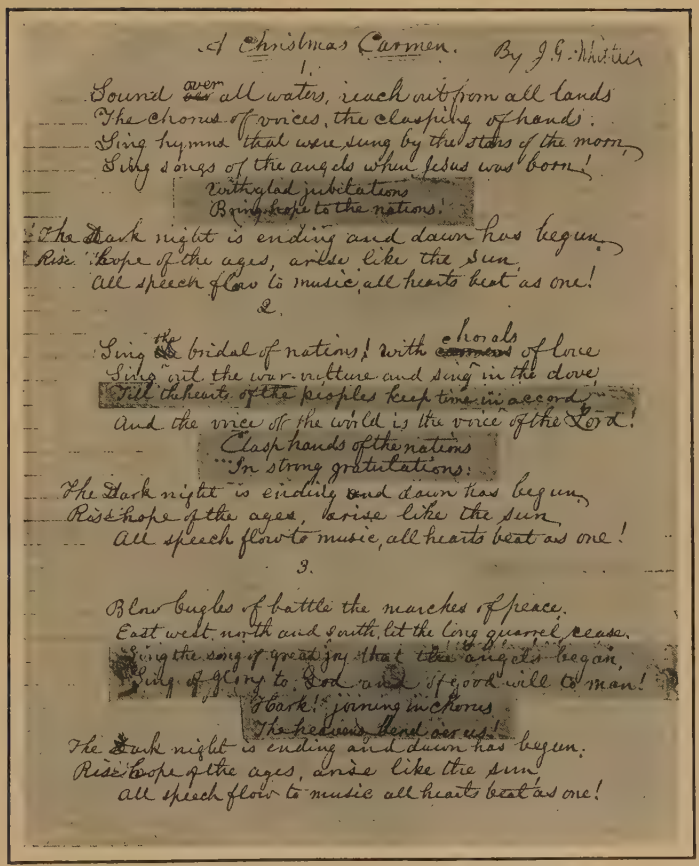
Inclination to Politics. — During the two years that Whittier attended the Academy he published about a hundred poems, which were well received — rather overpraised, in fact — by Garrison and a few others. Yet he showed no literary ambition — he inclined to a political career. This

inclination had perhaps some weight in leading him to accept the editorship of *The American Manufacturer*, a Boston weekly. In this paper he took a strong stand for temperance, the first reform he advocated; and wrote vigorously in favor of a protective tariff, a surprising fact — one would expect to find him preaching free trade on grounds similar to those set forth by George William Curtis. In less than a year his father's illness called him to Haverhill, where in addition to running the farm he edited the *Gazette*. Soon after the death of his father in the summer of 1830, Whittier accepted the editorship of *The New England Review*, the leading organ of the Connecticut protectionists, to which he had contributed while conducting the *Gazette*.

After about a year and a half in Hartford, ill health compelled Whittier to give up his position with the *Review;* and he returned to the Haverhill farm and his mother. His political writing for various journals had given him some popularity which seemed to promise political advancement. He had, moreover, become convinced that great poetry was beyond his power. Shortly after returning to Haverhill he wrote to a literary friend: "The truth is, I love poetry, with a love as warm, as fervent, as sincere, as any of the more gifted worshipers at the temple of the Muses. . . . But I feel and know that

> "'To other chords than mine belong
> The breathing of immortal song.'"

Joins the Abolitionists. — Desire for literary success gave way to desire for political success, and this in turn, and very shortly, gave way to absorption in a great cause. Garrison, who, as we have seen, admired Whittier's early poems and urged his securing a better education, set before the poet in 1833 the needs of the cause of abolition. He



A Christmas Carmen. By J. G. Whittier

1.

Sound over all waters, reach out from all lands
The chorus of voices, the clasping of hands:
Sing hymns that were sung by the stars of the morn,
Sing songs of the angels when Jesus was born!
With glad jubilations
Bring hope to the nations!
The Dark night is ending and dawn has begun,
Rise hope of the ages, arise like the sun,
All speech flow to music, all hearts beat as one!

2.

Sing the bridal of nations! with chorals of love
Sing out the war-vulture and sing in the dove,
Till the hearts of the peoples keep time in accord,
And the voice of the world is the voice of the Lord!
Clasp hands of the nations
In strong gratulations:
The Dark night is ending and dawn has begun,
Rise hope of the ages, arise like the sun,
All speech flow to music, all hearts beat as one!

3.

Blow bugles of battle the marches of peace,
East, west, north and south, let the long quarrel cease,
Sing the song of great joy that the angels began,
Sing of glory to God and of good will to man!
Hark! joining in chorus
The heavens bend over us!
The Dark night is ending and dawn has begun,
Rise hope of the ages, arise like the sun,
All speech flow to music all hearts beat as one!

FACSIMILE OF WHITTIER MANUSCRIPT.

The shaded portions are due to the poet's unique mode of revising—writing his changes on odd scraps of paper, and pasting these over the portions revised. (New York Public Library.)

thought it over and a few months later indicated his decision by a pamphlet, *Justice and Expediency*, which he published at his own expense. From this time till the end of the war Whittier's heart and pen were devoted solely to the movement in behalf of the black man. It was an unpopular movement; poems supporting it brought little or no remuneration; and Whittier had neither time nor health to make the farm pay. The farm was sold in 1836, and with his mother and sister he moved to the near-by town of Amesbury, purchasing a cottage which was their home for the remainder of their lives.

Whittier served one term in the Massachusetts legislature, but was prevented by poor health from serving a second term for which he was reëlected. He continued to write antislavery articles for the Haverhill *Gazette*, and in person to urge the members of the legislature to show sympathy for the cause. In March, 1838, he became editor of *The Pennsylvania Freeman*, in Philadelphia; but two months later the building in which the paper was published was burned by a mob. Other journals called for his services, and he was never idle. Much time was also used in attendance on conventions, and in personal interviews with leaders of abolition parties and societies throughout the East.

New England's "Pastoral" Poet. — During all these busy years Whittier's income was very small. From the publication of *Snow-Bound*, however, in the summer of 1865, he was enabled to live in considerable comfort. Mr. Pickard tells us that the poet received $10,000 from the first edition of this his most famous poem. From this time also the character of his work changes. "Up to a comparatively recent period," he writes in 1867, "my writings have been simply episodical, something apart from the real object and aim of my life." Now he could devote himself to expression of his real self, undisturbed by agitation outside of that self.

As a result we have a series of well-nigh perfect pictures of humble life in New England, and a series of noble outpourings of his profoundly religious character.

Last Years. — The change in reputation and fortune did not make him unqualifiedly happy; for the mother and sister who would have taken such pride in his success had passed away — the former in 1857, the latter in 1864. For

WHITTIER'S HOME AT AMESBURY.

the next twelve years his niece Elizabeth looked after his home in Amesbury; after her marriage in 1876, Whittier, though he kept his legal residence in Amesbury, spent most of his time in long visits to various friends and relatives in New Hampshire, Maine, and eastern Massachusetts. Among notable honors that he received may be mentioned election as overseer of Harvard and as trustee of Brown, the con-

ferring of the degrees of A.M. and LL.D. by Harvard, and the dinner given by the *Atlantic Monthly* on his seventieth birthday. The dinner brought together some fifty or sixty leading American writers, who in verse and speech paid tribute to the modest Quaker poet. Though never strong, Whittier lived longer than any of his long-lived ancestors, passing away in September, 1892, just before completing his eighty-fifth year.

"And now, what can I say of Whittier's power, —
Why should he see great visions, and dream dreams,
And voice them in undying melodies?
O friends, I know he saw, — and felt, — and sang, —
Because he ever kept one pure ideal,
One starry gleam, before him all his days.
He dwelt with Beauty, and he loved her well;
With Goodness, and he followed her behest."

In these lines from John Russell Hayes's *In Memory of Whittier* lies the explanation of Whittier's lasting influence. Colonel Higginson says that "Whittier during his whole life rarely lost a friend." The character of him who loved Beauty and followed the behest of Goodness attracted all who came in contact with it in the flesh, and has a permanent charm for those who can know it only in the written record. While recognizing that the language of his anti-slavery poems "at times seems severe and harsh," he was proud to say that he was one of the first to recognize the merit of Henry Timrod, and was an intimate friend of Paul H. Hayne, "though both wrote fiery lyrics against the North." With the adoption of the constitutional amendment abolishing slavery, Whittier sang his *Laus Deo*, concluding,

"With a sound of broken chains
Tell the nations that He reigns,
Who alone is Lord and God!"

and *To the Thirty-Ninth Congress* —

> "Then buried be the dreadful past,
> Its common slain be mourned, and let
> All memories soften to regret."

He then, in his own language, set himself "with kind words and deprecation of harsh retaliation, to welcome back the revolted states."

Besides the appeal of Whittier's character, there is an even wider appeal in his poems of New England familiar life. He was inferior to Lowell, Longfellow, and Holmes in technical art, and his work sometimes suffers, as does Hawthorne's, because of the excess of the moral element. Many have felt, for example, that *In School-Days* would be greater if the last two stanzas had not been written. But the "one pure ideal, one starry gleam" which he "kept before him all his days" gives a touch to his landscapes and everyday scenes and incidents that makes for enduring fame.

HOUSE IN MARBLEHEAD IN WHICH LIVED "SKIPPER IRESON."
Celebrated in Whittier's poem.

WALT WHITMAN, 1819–1892

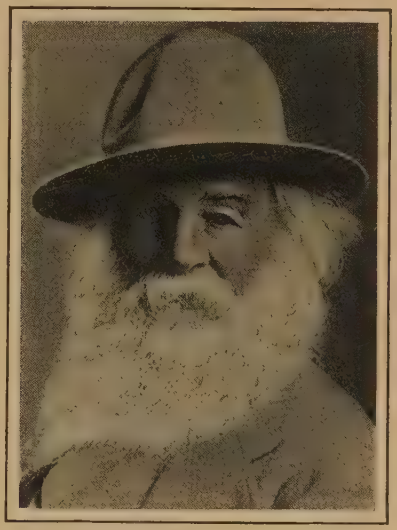
A Unique Writer. — Though Whitman has been dead twenty years, his place in poetry is far from fixed. Every reader must have an opinion; but whatever that opinion may be, he will find himself in good company. "I look upon Whitman," says John Burroughs, "as the one mountain thus far in our literary landscape." "Whitman," says Sidney Lanier, "is poetry's butcher. Huge raw collops slashed from the rump of poetry, and never mind gristle — is what Whitman feeds our souls with." He was an innovator who has had few followers and not a throng of admirers. He called himself the people's poet; but he has utterly failed to reach the people, and his eulogists are invariably found among the most highly cultured. He aspired to be America's poet, the interpreter of American democracy to the Old World; but even his intensest partisans do not claim that the interpretation is altogether accurate. A single poem of three lines, *To Foreign Lands*, setting forth the aspiration just mentioned, will give the reader an idea of the main problem in reading Whitman:

> "I heard that you ask'd for something to prove
> this puzzle the New World,
> And to define America, her athletic Democracy,
> Therefore I send you my poems that you behold
> in them what you wanted."

The first question that naturally arises when one reads this sort of writing is, *Is* it *poetry?* The main facts of his life give not a little aid in an attempt to answer this and other questions regarding his writings.

He was born May 31, 1819, on Long Island, where Whitmans had lived and farmed for nearly two centuries. Named Walter, he was called Walt to distinguish him from

his father. Besides being a farmer, Walter Whitman was a carpenter; and when his son was four years old, he moved to Brooklyn. Thanks to grandmothers who did not move, Walt spent considerable time in the country. He had only a few years in the public schools of Brooklyn, and at the age of twelve began to help support the family by working as an errand boy. He learned typesetting, and worked at the trade off and on for a good many years. At intervals he taught school — as to what subjects or how he taught them, little is known.



WALT WHITMAN.
The "Sage of Camden."

An Important Journey. — Along with his typesetting he did various kinds of journalistic work, which led in 1848 to his obtaining a place on the staff of a New Orleans paper. His connection with the paper lasted only a few months, and was in no way notable. What was, however, notable in the experience was the journey to and from the Louisiana city. Accompanied by a younger brother he made his way in leisurely style, walking much of the distance, and sailing down the Ohio and the Mississippi. The return was made mostly by boat, via Saint Louis, Chicago, the Great Lakes, and Buffalo. The 8000-mile trip, covering so great a portion of what was then the United States, could not but impress

any man with the physical, material greatness of the country, of which Whitman so constantly wrote.

First Volume. — Back in Brooklyn he joined his father in the contracting business, which promised large financial returns. He soon, however, retired from the connection, without explanation. If he had explained that he had a message for mankind, which he was to deliver in his peculiar unrhymed, unmetrical verse, the family would not have understood. One of his brothers, when the volume *Leaves of Grass* appeared in 1855, "didn't read it at all — didn't think it worth reading." The mother could make nothing of it. The book for a time found almost no readers except the critics, and they with few exceptions condemned it unhesitatingly. Whitman went off to think it over, and came back to Brooklyn determined "to go on with my poetic enterprise in my own way and finish it as well as I could." The following year he brought out an enlarged edition of *Leaves of Grass*, a title retained for subsequent issues of his poems down to 1889.

A Nurse in War Time. — When the Civil War came, George Whitman, Walt's younger brother, enlisted, but Walt did not, and it appears that he never thought seriously of doing so. "It is inconceivable," says Professor Perry, "that he could have made an effective soldier. The requisite obedience, swiftness of action, effacement of personal conviction, were not in him." Whitman doubtless realized this; but he could not foresee that a work quite as essential as fighting was to be his. Late in the second year of the war, news came to the family in Brooklyn that Captain George Whitman had been seriously wounded at Fredericksburg.

Walt immediately set out to attend his brother, found him already out of danger, and, stopping to see something of camp life, became interested in the sick and wounded.

From this time until the close of the war he gave himself to nursing in the army hospitals of Washington. That the visits of this self-sacrificing volunteer to the bedsides of the suffering were most welcome and helpful is shown by numerous testimonies. "His theory," says Carpenter, "was that personal affection played a large part in therapeutics"; and the smiling face and quiet manner of this giant nurse contributed to many recoveries. Though Whitman was appreciated by so many individual soldiers, there is no evidence of appreciation or even of recognition of his work in official circles. His nursing undermined his own health, and the last twenty years of his life he was a semi-invalid, with a meager income, which was never supplemented by a government generally regarded as almost criminally free in distributing pensions.

Patriotic Verse. — During the first year and a half of the war Whitman wrote a number of poems expressing the spirit of the North, which were published in 1865 under the title, *Drum-Taps*. While the volume was in press, Lincoln was assassinated, on hearing of which event Whitman composed two poems, published shortly after as *Sequel to Drum-Taps*. The first of these Lincoln laments — *O Captain! my Captain!* — is one of the author's few poems in rhymed stanzas, and is universally admired; while the other — *When Lilacs Last in the Dooryard Bloomed* — is only a little less popular.

For the next eight years (1865–1873) the poet was a government clerk in Washington, where he became a well-known figure, with intimate friends among society people, car conductors, and wagon drivers. As preparation for singing the "athletic Democracy" of America, he had from his young manhood cultivated acquaintance with all classes, especially the less cultivated and less refined, since these constitute so much the majority. Early in 1873 he was stricken with

paralysis, but recovered and after about two months returned to his desk. This Washington life, however, was soon to terminate forever. In May Whitman's mother became ill at her son George's home in Camden, New Jersey; and after her death Walt had a second and more severe paralytic stroke, from which he never wholly recovered.

THE WHITMAN VAULT IN HARLEIGH CEMETERY, CAMDEN.
"The best house he ever lived in," said a fellow-townsman.

Life in Camden, and Death. — During the last nineteen years of his life he lived in Camden, — sometimes with his brother, sometimes with friends, and from 1884 in a house of his own. He suffered a number of illnesses, in the intervals of which he traveled much, often lecturing on Lincoln, and covering most of the country from Boston to the Rocky

Mountains. His house became the Mecca for his hosts of admirers, who regarded him as a sort of oracle. He lived to hear that he was considered a great poet by many discriminating foreign critics, and to receive a fair income from the sale of his works in America. He died March 26, 1892, and was buried four days later in a costly tomb purchased by himself the previous year.

Whitman's Critics Now Less Severe. — While it is true that two widely separated views of Whitman are current, it is equally true that the view of Lanier quoted above is less frequently heard now than formerly. Dissenters have come to look more closely for the merits attributed to him. Many of the criticisms once generally heard are heard no longer, since a better understanding of the poet and his aims prevails. The complaint of his excessive egotism, the over-prevalence of the "I" and "myself," is now recognized as unfair, since it is seen that "I" is not Walt Whitman, but "a simple separate person," or humanity, of which he believed himself to be a typical specimen. The complaint of his vulgarity, not infrequently called indecency, which has led an occasional library to exclude his poems from the shelves, is now felt as honest plain speaking, by one supremely conscious

> "Of Life immense in passion, pulse, and power,
> Cheerful, for freest action form'd under the laws divine."

His "catalogue" method of composition, by which he strings out long lists of words and phrases with apparently an entire disregard of their fitness in poetry, is seen as an attempt to express his large conceptions of life, democracy, friendship, patriotism.

His Work Avowedly Experimental. — On the other hand, many of the dissenters have come to admit that Whitman appreciated the elements of greatness in our national life and ideals, and voiced them in noteworthy form, even if,

as they say, inadequately. They see also that "the institution of the dear love of comrades," which he said he would "establish" everywhere, is an institution much needed in this selfish age, and well worthy the poet's song. As a last point appealing to the non-Whitmanites may be mentioned the frank statements frequent in Whitman that he regarded his work, not as a last word, but merely as an experiment. "The word I myself put primarily for the description of them" (*i.e. Leaves of Grass*) "as they stand at last, is the word Suggestiveness. I round and finish little, if anything; and could not, consistently with my scheme. The reader will always have his or her part to do, just as much as I have had mine." So speaks the poet in an essay written a few years before his death, *A Backward Glance o'er Travel'd Roads*, which is an excellent preparation for reading his poetry. "The volume" (still referring to *Leaves*) "is a sortie — whether to prove triumphant, and conquer its field of aim and escape and construction, nothing less than a hundred years from now can fully answer." And again: "My volume is a candidate for the future." The experimental and suggestive character of his work is plainly and forcibly avowed in one of his poems, which we quote entire:

"Poets to come! orators, singers, musicians to come!
Not to-day is to justify me and answer what I am for,
But you, a new brood, native, athletic, continental, greater than before known,
Arouse! for you must justify me.

"I myself but write one or two indicative words for the future,
I but advance a moment only to wheel and hurry back in the darkness.

"I am a man who, sauntering along without fully stopping, turns a casual look upon you and then averts his face,
Leaving it to you to prove and define it,
Expecting the main things from you."

More than any other figure in American literature, Whitman defies a sure estimate. He seems, says Professor Trent, a conservative critic, "too large a man and poet for adequate comprehension at present." In the case of no other writer in our literary history is it so necessary to await a day which will throw him into a just perspective.

OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES, 1809–1894

A Versatile Writer. — The last writer coming within our survey wished to be remembered by one poem, *The Chambered Nautilus;* and it seems truly, as Whittier said, to be "booked for immortality." It is too much to expect, however, that a single poem of thirty-five lines will confer immortality on its author. Holmes is far from holding to a place in our literature by so slight a thread. Of his many claims to remembrance the humor and philosophy of *The Autocrat of the Breakfast Table* constitute the strongest. Lowell got to the core of Holmes's excellence in his poem, *To Holmes on his Seventy-Fifth Birthday:*

A Portrait of Holmes.

Which suggests the Doctor or the Professor, rather than the Poet or the Autocrat.

"You with the classic few belong
Who tempered wisdom with a smile."

Holmes also wrote novels, biographies, literary and scientific essays, and humorous poems; and the question has been asked of him as of Lowell whether, with his attention and interest more restricted, he would not have reached a higher place. The question is an idle one — men like Holmes and Lowell cannot be shut up in any one small field.

Not an Active Abolitionist. — One striking difference between Holmes and his fellow poets of New England should be mentioned. Though believing slavery to be "a dreadful business," he declined to affiliate with abolition societies or to use his pen in behalf of this or other reforms. Chidden in 1846 for this apparent indifference or lack of sympathy by Lowell, Holmes wrote a reply of some length, justifying himself and indirectly reproving the younger poet for his immature judgment. "I shall always be pleased rather to show what is beautiful in the life around me than to be pitching into giant vices, against which the acrid pulpit and the corrosive newspaper will always anticipate the gentle poet. Each of us has his theory of life, of art, of his own existence and relations. It is too much to ask of you to enter fully into mine, but be very well assured that it exists, — that it has its axioms, its intuitions, its connected beliefs as well as your own. Let me try to improve and please my fellow-men after my own fashion at present." The general verdict is that the Autocrat's fashion was quite as good as his critic's, as the critic himself came to realize.

Early Life and Education. — Holmes was born in Cambridge, August 29, 1809. On both sides he "came of the best New England stock," tracing his ancestry to a Holmes who settled in Connecticut in 1686, and to a Bradstreet and a Dudley who were early governors of Massachusetts Bay. It may

be mentioned that this Bradstreet was the husband of Anne, the poet discussed above. In another line on his mother's side he was descended from a Dutch Wendell, who came to Albany, New York, about 1640, and whose grandson Jacob removed to Boston early in the next century. Dr. Holmes

HOLMES'S BIRTHPLACE, CAMBRIDGE.
The "house with a gambrel roof," as it is called in *Parson Turell's Legacy*.

thought well of families who had been prominent for four or five generations; but he liked also, he said, "to see worthless rich people have to yield their places to deserving poor ones."

Holmes's father was pastor in Cambridge, and had some reputation as an historian. In his father's large library young Oliver "tumbled about," an occupation which he believed to be of distinct value to any child. Up to the age of fif-

teen he had an ordinary school training in Cambridge, after which he was sent to Phillips-Andover Academy. The only events of his boyhood that his biographers have been able to unearth are a lasting friendship with one Phineas Barnes and an undeserved thrashing, both of the Andover period. His whole life, indeed, was remarkably uneventful. From Andover, Holmes proceeded to Harvard, and was graduated, after an inconspicuous career, in the famous class of '29, of which he was poet. He then took up the study of law, but after a year gave it up for medicine. This year of 1830 was made notable in Holmes's life by his writing of *Old Ironsides*, the stirring lyric of successful protest against the destruction of the famous old vessel. "This is probably the only case," says Professor Page, "in which a government policy was changed by the verses of a college student."

"Professor" Holmes. — After a short period of study in a private medical school, Holmes went abroad for two and a half years, spending most of the time in the hospitals of Paris. Returning to America, he received the degree of M.D. from Harvard in 1836, and published a volume of poems, mostly humorous. It appears that being a wit and a poet distinctly hindered his progress as a practicing physician; but in the professor's chair he was an unquestionable success. Two years after graduation he was appointed Professor of Anatomy at Dartmouth College and nine years later he came to the same position at Harvard. For thirty-five years he occupied this chair, which he called a settee, in allusion to the number of subjects he was expected to teach. The best evidence of his power in the classroom is the fact that his lecture hour was always one o'clock, because no other teacher could hold the attention of students who had already listened to four lectures on other subjects. In 1840 he had married Miss Amelia Jackson, "an ideal wife, — a comrade most delightful, a helpmate the most useful."

For ten years after his joining the Harvard Medical Faculty Holmes's prose was on professional subjects. His poems were mostly local and "occasional"; that is, they dealt with matters of New England or merely Bostonian or Harvard interest, and were usually composed for special occasions — birthdays, class reunions, and the like. He wrote a poem for every reunion of the class of '29 from 1851 to 1889, a series which still holds first rank in its kind. Of these thirty-nine class productions probably the best known is *The Boys*, beginning:

> "Has there any old fellow got mixed with the boys?
> If there has, take him out, without making a noise."

The "Autocrat." — It was in the year 1857, when Holmes was forty-eight years old, that he "found himself." A new magazine to be started in Boston Lowell agreed to edit, if Holmes would agree to contribute. Holmes suggested the name, *The Atlantic Monthly*, and wrote in serial form for the first twelve numbers *The Autocrat of the Breakfast Table*. From this time his reputation was as a prose writer, and he is usually spoken of as the "Autocrat." In this book is recorded the conversation of a supposedly typical Boston boarding house, in which the Autocrat himself takes a leading part. Several of the characters are sketched rather interestingly, and the little touch of romance is pleasant. But — "Please to remember," says the Autocrat in his third number, "this is talk; just as easy and just as formal as I choose to make it." It is the "talk" of the narrator that carries the book; and this talk is, naturally, rambling and varied. It deals with authors and cats, Shakespeare and Franklin and Aristophanes, intemperance, the privilege of misquoting, and almost as many more topics as the book has pages. Some of the author's best poems — for example, *The Chambered Nautilus* and *The*

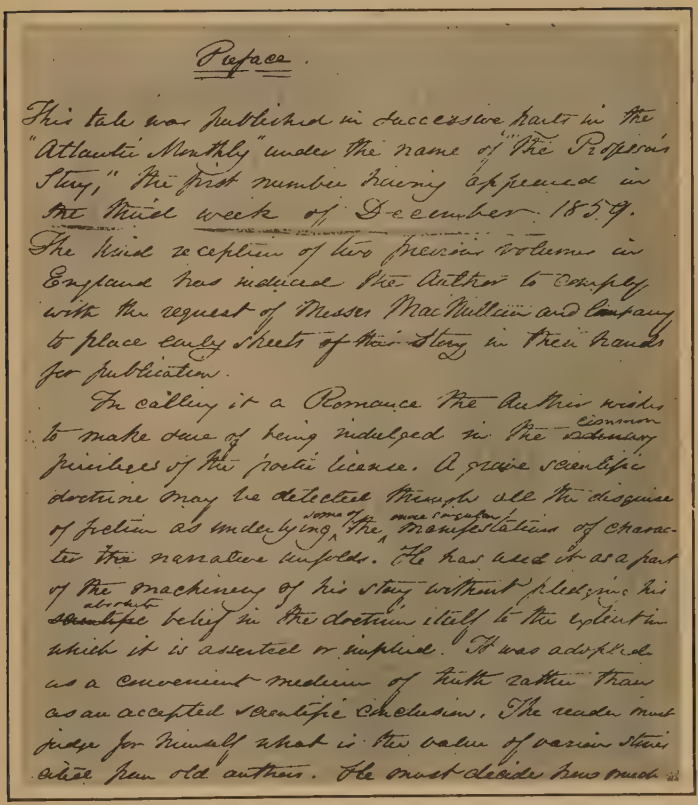
One-Hoss Shay — appeared here for the first time. At the other extreme Holmes indulged to the full his fondness for punning, of which the following is a fair specimen: "The *Atlantic*, by the way, is not so called because it is a *notion*."

The *Autocrat* was followed by *The Professor at the Breakfast Table* (1860), and *The Poet at the Breakfast Table* (1872), and the same free and loose style of composition was used in *Over the Teacups* (1890). These fall below the *Autocrat* only as imitations and sequels usually fall below originals, with, in *Over the Teacups*, the additional weakness of old age.

The Novelist. — In the *Autocrat* Holmes expressed his belief "that every articulately speaking human being has in him stuff for one novel." His actions indicate that he thought himself equipped above the average, for he wrote three novels — *Elsie Venner* (1861), *The Guardian Angel* (1867), and *A Mortal Antipathy* (1885). They are not great works, and add nothing to the author's fame. In addition to the shortcoming that he was not a good story-teller, Holmes wrote these works from the professional rather than the artistic point of view. They are three studies in heredity; and while they hold the reader's attention, they also justify the epithet given them by an old lady — "medicated novels."

The Biographer. — Two biographies written by Holmes are hardly more successful than the novels. That of *John Lothrop Motley* (1878) was written too soon after the subject's death, while the controversy over his recall as Minister to England was still fresh in people's minds.[1] Holmes's *Motley* must be called special pleading or even apology for a close friend. The biography of *Emerson* (1884) is according to almost universal opinion "delightful"; but the critical reader will be disappointed. Only on its religious side was

[1] See page 156.



Preface.

This tale was published in successive parts in the "Atlantic Monthly" under the name of "The Professor's Story," the first number having appeared in the third week of December 1859. The kind reception of two previous volumes in England has induced the Author to comply with the request of Messrs MacMillan and Company to place early sheets of this Story in their hands for publication.

In calling it a Romance the Author wishes to make sure of being indulged in the ~~ordinary~~ common privileges of the poetic license. A grave scientific doctrine may be detected through all the disguise of fiction as underlying some of the more singular manifestations of character the narrative unfolds. He has used it as a part of the machinery of his story without pledging his ~~scientific~~ absolute belief in the doctrine itself to the extent in which it is asserted or implied. It was adopted as a convenient medium of truth rather than as an accepted scientific conclusion. The reader must judge for himself what is the value of various stories cited from old authors. He must decide how much

FACSIMILE OF HOLMES'S PREFACE TO *Elsie Venner*.
One of his "medicated novels."

Holmes sympathetic with Transcendentalism, and it was impossible for him to set forth — perhaps impossible for him to comprehend sufficiently — the "Sage of Concord." As an intimate picture of a neighbor and friend who was one of the most lovable of men, the *Emerson* is altogether admirable.

In 1882, at the age of seventy-three, Holmes resigned his active duties as professor to devote himself wholly to literature. Four years later he made his second visit to Europe, spending most of his time in England, where he was enthusiastically received. Three British universities conferred honorary degrees on him. The notes of this trip he published on his return with the title, *Our Hundred Days in Europe.*

Last Years. — Holmes reached his three-score-and-ten without suffering any great loss or other cause of personal grief. It would have been almost beyond possibility, however, for him to finish out fifteen years more in the same way. The first break came in 1884, when his son Edward died, followed four years later by his classmate and devoted friend, James Freeman Clarke. In the same year came the greatest sorrow of all, the death of his wife, who had for forty-five years "smoothed his way for him, removed annoyances from his path, [done] for him with her easy executive capacity a thousand things, which otherwise he would have missed or have done with difficulty for himself" (Morse).

Hardly more than a year after his wife's death, his daughter, Mrs. Sargent, who had closed a beautiful home in Boston in order to keep her father's house in Cambridge, passed away also. Holmes's letters referring to these losses, while admitting that they were heavy blows, show no repining and are full of gratitude for even the smallest consolation he finds. He was not, however, destined to spend his last years alone. Almost immediately after Mrs. Sargent's death, Holmes's daughter-in-law, Mrs. Oliver Wendell Holmes, Jr.,

whom he described as "a very helpful, hopeful, powerful, as well as brilliant woman," came to him; and she and her husband, now Justice Holmes, of the United States Supreme Court, made his home theirs until his death. This event occurred October 7, 1894. He had outlived all his noted contemporaries, and was indeed

"The last leaf upon the tree."

An Attractive Personality. — Of Holmes Thackeray said, when the *Autocrat* was fresh: "No man in England can write with his charming mixture of wit, pathos, and imagination." Mr. Morse tells us that out of over three thousand newspaper clippings collected after Holmes's death not more than fifty failed to call him either "genial" or "kindly." Those who know his writings know him — it has often been remarked that a lengthy

CARTOON OF HOLMES.

Which appeared in *Vanity Fair*, a London periodical, and highly amused and pleased him.

autobiography could add little or nothing to our understanding of this delightful personality. He is a Bostonian of Bostonians; witness his *Autocrat:* "Boston State House is the hub of the Solar System. You couldn't pry that out of a Boston man if you had the tire of all creation straightened out for a crowbar." This is said in jest by a more or less fictitious personage; but it is an important clause in the author's own creed. Equally strong is his affection for and pride in his Alma Mater; witness the long list of class reunion poems already referred to, and the verses for various university occasions.

Above all the attractive elements in his make-up is his gift of humor, with that of its complement, pathos. The combination of these two gifts is shown excellently, if not better than anywhere else, in one of his earliest lyrics, *The Last Leaf*, giving a picture of an out-of-date *old* man who is reported to have been a fine *young* man. Of purely humorous poems there is a long and glorious list, from *The Height of the Ridiculous*, written when the poet was twenty-one, to *The Broomstick Train*, sixty years later. In the former he tells how a humorous composition of his sent his man servant into fits, since when, he says,

> "I never dare to write
> As funny as I can."

In the latter he asserts that the trolley cars, then a very recent invention, are run by the witches who did so much mischief in early times. In this, in *The One-Hoss Shay*, and in *Parson Turell's Legacy*, he appears to have forgotten the implied promise of the lines just quoted from the early poem. To say that these humorous poems are "booked for immortality" as is the *Nautilus*, would be rash; but they have a vigor and charm which will give them a tenacious hold on life, certainly as long as the personality and career of their author form so interesting a study.

CONCLUSION

We have said that the year 1892 closed an epoch in both England and America. We have also assumed that literature in English produced since 1892 is inferior to that produced in the period then finished. Such is not, however, the explanation of the choice of date to end our survey. This we can best give in the language of Matthew Arnold: "No man can trust himself to speak of his own time and his own contemporaries with the same sureness of judgment and the same proportion as of times and men gone by"; and in a book like this "we should avoid, as far as we can, all hindrances to sureness of judgment and proportion."

Professor Trent is inclined to put this limitation on criticism of most of the writers covered by our fourth chapter. "It is impossible," says he, "to treat otherwise than tentatively, and to a certain extent in impressionistic fashion authors who have seemed almost a part of our own generation." That this feeling is widespread among critics is shown by the frequency of the word "seems" in the estimates of men as far removed from us as Longfellow and Emerson, or even Poe and Hawthorne. In this book we have attempted a minimum of critical judgment; and in cases where large differences of opinion are still found, have attempted a fair presentation of both sides.

Books of this character sometimes adopt another method of restricting the authors treated, drawing the line between the living and the dead. This method makes anything like judicial criticism even more difficult than does the choice of a year somewhat removed. If no living writers were treated in a history of English literature written in this year (1914), we should have to exclude Thomas Hardy and Kipling while including George Meredith and Swinburne. Yet the four were almost equally prominent in the literary

world twenty years ago. In American literature we should feel it necessary to discuss Eugene Field, Marion Crawford, Mark Twain, while we should be prohibited from discussing James Whitcomb Riley or William Dean Howells. Yet the two groups represent almost equally the spirit and tendencies of the past quarter of a century.

The failure to treat living or recent writers, and the expression of a belief that American literature since 1892 is inferior to what preceded, do not signify that we consider current literature without merit or the future as dark. Outside of the newspapers, the majority of people to-day may be said to limit their reading to the popular magazines. Of the contents of these publications the most notable portions are the short-stories, which in many cases reach a high degree of excellence. Going a step farther, we may say that the most successful of these short-stories usually set forth and interpret some characteristic bits of American life — a New England village, or a Western mining camp, or a fashionable section in a large city, or a remote and backward mountain community. A healthy humor is generally found in these stories. In the higher class of magazines critical articles of great merit constantly appear, showing thorough study and careful presentation of topics of great interest and of vital importance, in literature, history, economics, social science, biology — in fact, in every subject which an aggressive and progressive people find of probable use in their development. In the fields covered by our numerous and varied magazines, it seems likely that a vigorous native literature may arise, which will be able to hold its own even beside the great output of the half century centering about 1850.

SUPPLEMENTARY LIST OF AUTHORS NOT TREATED IN THE BODY OF THE HISTORY

Chapters I–II (1608–1809)

Brackenridge, Hugh Henry (1748–1816). Born in Scotland. Came to Pennsylvania in youth. Lawyer, and for the last fifteen years of his life Judge of the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania. Chief work, *Modern Chivalry*, a burlesque novel. Died in Pennsylvania.

Byrd, William (1674–1744). A native Virginian of wealth and position. Educated in England and on the Continent. Member of the commission that fixed the boundary between Virginia and North Carolina. Of his works, which he left in manuscript, the best is the *History of the Dividing Line*, an account of the commission's work. Died in Virginia.

Cotton, John (1585–1652). Born in England. New England preacher, and author of fifty books. Very influential in his own day, but now chiefly remembered because of a controversy with Roger Williams, and because he was Cotton Mather's grandfather. Died in Boston.

Sewall, Samuel (1652–1730). Born in England. Chief Justice of the Massachusetts Supreme Court, and sat in the witchcraft trials. His *Diary* is a valuable record of the life of the colony from 1673 to 1729. His *Selling of Joseph* is mentioned above (page 131). Being convinced of the error of his decisions in the witchcraft trials, he performed penance in public for many years. Died in Boston.

Williams, Roger (about 1600–1683). Born in London. Apostle of religious toleration, and founder of Rhode Island. Died in Rhode Island.

Chapter III (1809–1865)

Kennedy, John Pendleton (1795–1870). Born in Baltimore. Served in War of 1812. Member of Congress. Secretary of the Navy. Wrote novels, of which the best are *Swallow Barn*, a tale of colonial Virginia; and *Horse-Shoe Robinson*, a tale of Revolutionary days. Died in Newport, Rhode Island.

Paulding, James Kirke (1779–1860). Born in New York. Kinsman of Irving, and associated with him in early literary work. Secretary of the Navy under Van Buren. Wrote novels that enjoyed a certain amount of popularity in their day, but can hardly be said to have "survived." Died in New York.

Prescott, William Hickling (1796–1859). Born in Salem, Massachusetts. His sight was almost destroyed by an accident while in college; but he found means to get hold of the information he needed for historical writing, and produced a great series of histories — *The Reign of Ferdinand and Isabella*, *The Conquest of Mexico*, *The Conquest of Peru*, *The Reign of Philip II.* Died in Salem.

Read, Thomas Buchanan (1822–1872). Born in Chester County, Pennsylvania. Led a wandering life — in Philadelphia, Cincinnati, Boston, New York, Europe. Engaged in various occupations — tailor, cigar-maker, sculptor, sign and portrait painter, verse-maker. Remembered chiefly for a few lyrics, best-known of which is *Sheridan's Ride*. Died in New York City.

Simms, William Gilmore (1806–1870). Born in Charleston, South Carolina. Generally called the most important man of letters in the South before the War. Wrote poems, novels, and journalistic work of various kinds, amounting in all to nearly one hundred volumes. His novels are better than his verse; and of them the best deal with Colonial and Revolutionary times in the South — *The Yemassee* and *The Partisan*. Died in Charleston.

Stowe, Harriet Beecher (1811–1896). Born in Litchfield, Connecticut. Sister of the distinguished pulpit orator, Henry Ward Beecher. Made famous by a single story — *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, which aims to set forth the abuses of slavery. Later works, like *The Minister's Wooing* and *Oldtown Folks*, tales of New England life, entitled Mrs. Stowe to a higher place in literature than does the better known book. After the War she lived in Florida, and devoted herself to the cause of the Southern people, well knowing the unfitness of either the negro or the "carpet-bagger" to restore order out of the chaos left by the great conflict. Died in Hartford, Connecticut.

Taylor, Bayard (1825–1878). Born at Kennett Square, Chester County, Pennsylvania. First became known as a writer by his

Views Afoot, an account of two years' travel in Europe. Wrote poems, well received, but little regarded to-day ; and novels, which also have lost much of their early fame. His translation of Goethe's *Faust*, however, still holds a high place, and seems likely to constitute his chief claim to distinction. Of his poems the *Bedouin Love Song* is best known, partly, perhaps, for its musical setting by Pinsuti. *The Story of Kennett* is his best novel. Died in Germany, soon after reaching that country as United States Minister.

Willis, Nathaniel Parker (1806–1867). Born in Portland, Maine. An influential figure in his day, his career belongs rather to the history of New York City journalism, though he produced some successful specimens of what is now called "society verse." Died in New York.

Chapter IV (1865–1892) and After

Alcott, Louisa May (1832–1888). Born in Philadelphia. Very successful writer of children's stories — *Little Women*, *Little Men*, *Jo's Boys*, *Eight Cousins*, *Rose in Bloom*, *Jack and Jill*. Died in Boston.

Aldrich, Thomas Bailey (1836–1907). Born in Portsmouth, New Hampshire. Lived for some time in the South in boyhood, then a few years in New York City. From about 1860 Aldrich belonged to the Boston literary group. Editor *Atlantic Monthly*, 1881–1890. Wrote some poems, but is best known for his stories, of which the most famous are *Marjorie Daw* and *The Story of a Bad Boy*. Died in Boston.

Allen, James Lane (1849). Born near Lexington, Kentucky. Novelist. Stories : *A Kentucky Cardinal*, *Aftermath* (sequel to the preceding), *The Choir Invisible*, *The Reign of Law*. Living in New York City.

Burroughs, John (1837). Born in New York. Naturalist and literary essayist. Has published many collections of essays, such as *Fresh Fields*, *Indoor Studies*. Since 1874 he "has lived on a farm [West Park, near Poughkeepsie, New York], devoting his time to literature and fruit culture." His bachelor cottage bears the picturesque name "Slabsides."

Cable, George Washington (1844). Born in New Orleans. Served in the Confederate army. After the War entered journalism. Wrote stories of the Creoles of Louisiana, first collected in 1879 in

Old Creole Days. Since this volume Cable has written a number of novels, of which the most successful are *The Grandissimes*, and *John March, Southerner.* Living in Northampton, Massachusetts.

Churchill, Winston (1871). Born in Saint Louis. Novelist. Best known novels: *Richard Carvel*, *The Crisis*, *The Crossing*, *The Inside of the Cup.* Living at Cornish, New Hampshire.

Clemens, Samuel Langhorne (1835–1910), better known as "Mark Twain." Born in Missouri. Printer, and steamboat pilot on the Mississippi. Moving west, became journalist in Nevada and California. At age of thirty-two went East, and began his career as humorist. *Innocents Abroad*, *Roughing It*, and *Following the Equator* are unevenly humorous books of travel. Wrote a number of excellent short stories, such as *The Million Pound Bank Note*, *A Double-Barreled Detective Story*, and the *Jumping Frog. The Prince and the Pauper* is a delightful child's story. Twain's generally admitted masterpieces, however, are two stories of the life he had seen in the Mississippi valley, *Tom Sawyer*, and *Huckleberry Finn.* Died in Connecticut.

Crawford, Francis Marion (1854–1909). Born in Italy. Partly educated in America, but spent comparatively little time in this country, and made his permanent home in Italy after 1883. Most of his stories are Italian in setting and characters, the best being a trilogy dealing with three generations of a family, *Saracinesca*, *Sant' Ilario*, and *Don Orsino.* Held very decided views as to the function of fiction, set forth in essay, *The Novel: What It Is.* Died in Italy.

Field, Eugene (1850–1895). Born in Saint Louis. Life spent in journalism in the Middle West. Best known for his poems of childhood, like *Little Boy Blue*, *Wynken, Blynken, and Nod*, *Seein' Things*, and *Jest 'fore Christmas.* Died in Chicago.

Ford, Paul Leicester (1865–1902). Born in Brooklyn, New York. Historian and novelist. Best novel *The Honorable Peter Stirling*, based to some extent on the life of President Cleveland. In the field of history, where he seems likely to be rated higher than in the field of pure literature, some of his important works are: *The Many-Sided Franklin*, *The True George Washington*, *The Works of Thomas Jefferson* (editor), *Essays on the Constitution* (editor). Died in New York.

FREEMAN, MARY E. WILKINS (1862). Born in Massachusetts. Has written many sketches of New England village life, with good character studies: *A New England Nun*, *The Heart's Highway*, *Understudies*, and others. Living in Metuchen, New Jersey.

HALE, EDWARD EVERETT (1822–1909). Born in Boston. Preacher and man of letters. Chaplain, United States Senate, from 1903 until death. Best-known story, *The Man without a Country*. Died in Boston.

HARRIS, JOEL CHANDLER (1848–1908). Born in Eatonton, Georgia. Editor, the Atlanta *Constitution;* and creator of "Uncle Remus," the type of the old Georgia darkey "befo' de war." Died in Atlanta.

HARTE, FRANCIS BRET (1839–1902). Born in Albany, New York. Like Field, Twain, Harris, a journalist. Spent about twenty years from 1854 in California, the life of whose mining towns he depicted in verse and in prose tale. Only one poem of Harte's is widely known to-day — *Plain Language from Truthful James* (also called *The Heathen Chinee*). Many tales still widely read and ranked high by critics, among them *The Luck of Roaring Camp*, *The Outcasts of Poker Flat*, *Tennessee's Partner*, *How Santa Claus Came to Simpson's Bar*. Died in England.

HOLLAND, JOSIAH GILBERT (1819–1881). Born in Massachusetts. Editor, first of Springfield *Republican*, and later, of *The Century Magazine*. Wrote satirical essays under the name of "Timothy Titcomb"; poems; and novels, which were very popular in their day, but are now recognized as very commonplace. Poems — *Katrina*, *Bitter Sweet;* novels — *Seven Oaks*, *Arthur Bonnicastle*. Died in New York City.

HOWELLS, WILLIAM DEAN (1837). Born in Ohio, but his literary activity is connected chiefly with New York City, where he has been associated with various magazines. Although he has produced many kinds of literary work, he is notably at his best in realistic fiction. Commonly called the "Dean of American Writers." A fair knowledge of Howells can be got from *Their Wedding Journey*, *A Modern Instance*, and *The Rise of Silas Lapham*. Living in New York City.

JAMES, HENRY (1849). Born in New York. Except for the accident of birth, James has small title to inclusion among American

writers. He was educated in Europe, and has lived in England since the age of twenty. Attitude towards things American is for the most part either patronizing or mildly contemptuous. Most important works are novels, of which *The Portrait of a Lady* and *The Princess Casamassima* are representative.

Jewett, Sarah Orne (1849–1909). Born in South Berwick, Maine. Wrote many tales of New England life, including *Deephaven*, *The Country of the Pointed Firs*, and *A Native of Winby, and Other Tales*. Died in the house in which she was born, a colonial mansion a hundred and fifty years old.

Mifflin, Lloyd (1846). Born and still lives in Columbia, Pennsylvania. Has devoted his literary efforts chiefly to sonnet-writing.

Miller, Joaquin (1841–1913). Born in Indiana. "The Poet of the Sierras." Treats in verse better than Harte's the same sort of subjects Harte treated. Also farmer, miner, lawyer, judge, editor. Died in Oakland, California.

Mitchell, Silas Weir (1839–1914). Born in Philadelphia. Physician and novelist. After becoming widely known as a specialist in nervous diseases, and acquiring financial independence, turned to the occupation he had always longed for — literature. Attained great success in his chosen line. Best novel, perhaps, is *Hugh Wynne*, a story of the Revolution. Died in Philadelphia.

Murfree, Mary Noailles (1850); pen-name, "Charles Egbert Craddock." Born in Murfreesboro, near Nashville, Tennessee. Has succeeded in portraying in vivid fashion the life and characters of the Tennessee mountains. Some titles: *In the "Stranger-People's" Country*, *The Mystery of Witch-Face Mountain, and Other Stories*, *The Prophet of the Great Smoky Mountains*, *The Despot of Broomsedge Cove*. Still living in Murfreesboro.

Page, Thomas Nelson (1853). Born Hanover County, Virginia. Lawyer. Began literary career with stories of ante-bellum days in Virginia, collected under the title, *In Ole Virginia*. A longer story, for children, *Two Little Confederates*. Has also written novels, of which the most noteworthy is *Red Rock*, dealing with the Reconstruction period. Author of some works not fiction — *The Negro: The Southerner's Problem*; *Robert E. Lee, The Southerner*; and *Robert E. Lee, Man and Soldier*. Appointed Ambassador to Italy, 1913. Residence in Washington, D.C., for many years past.

PARKMAN, FRANCIS (1823–1893). Born in Boston. After graduation from Harvard, made a tour of exploration through the far West, the result of which was *The Oregon Trail.* A different sort of result was seriously impaired health, which proved as great a handicap as Prescott's accident proved to him. Like Prescott, however, Parkman triumphed over his weakness, and produced a notable series of historical works usually referred to by the general title, *France and England in North America.* Beginning with *The Conspiracy of Pontiac* (1851), Parkman was occupied with the theme for forty years, concluding with *A Half-Century of Conflict* the year before his death. Died at Jamaica Plain, Massachusetts.

RILEY, JAMES WHITCOMB (1853). Born in Indiana. Widely known and loved as the "Hoosier" poet. Poems mostly in dialect, and with a strong appeal to young readers. First collected volume, *The Old Swimmin'-Hole, and 'Leven More Poems.* Other favorite works are: *Poems Here at Home, The Lockerbie Book, Raggedy Man, When the Frost is on the Punkin, and Other Poems, An Old Sweetheart of Mine.* A biographical edition of his complete works was published in 1913. Living in Indianapolis.

STEDMAN, EDMUND CLARENCE (1833–1908). Born in Connecticut. Poet and critic. Of most value for his longer critical works — *Poets of America*, and *Victorian Poets;* and for the anthologies covering these fields. Died in New York City.

VAN DYKE, HENRY (1852). Born in Germantown, Philadelphia. Pastor in New York City; Professor in Princeton University; Minister to The Netherlands, 1913. Poems, essays, and one story that has attained world-wide fame — *The Story of the Other Wise Man.* Essays collected under the titles *Fisherman's Luck, Little Rivers, The Ruling Passion, The Blue Flower.* Home, Princeton, New Jersey.

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Works specifically referred to in the history are followed in each case by the page on which the reference occurs, and are listed under the names of the biographers and critics. Other standard works not so referred to, but to which the present writer — in common with all who enter the field — is largely indebted, are listed under the names of the authors with whom they deal. The list pretends to be only a selection. Abbreviations: A. M. L., *American Men of Letters*, Houghton Mifflin Co., Boston; E. M. L., *English Men of Letters*, The Macmillan Co., New York; Beacon, *Beacon Biographies*, Small, Maynard & Co., Boston; G. W. S., *Great Writers Series*, Walter Scott, London.

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